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THE POWER OF DARKNESS

# The Nation

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## Events of the Week.

SIR WILLIAM COLLINS, a Liberal Moderate of distinction, started on Wednesday the first effective intervention that Parliament has made since the war began. The power and weight of the interrogation, in which many representative Liberals and one Tory, Lord Henry Bentinck, joined, were very great. Sir William Collins said that Ministers' language had fallen short of the early idealism of the war, and that their want of sympathy and support for revolutionary Russia had drawn her into the circle of German autocracy. He added a plain hint that he preferred Mr. Wilson's speeches to Mr. George's. Mr. Ponsonby followed with a vehement but honest denunciation of the secret treaties, on which Mr. Balfour, being unable to answer Sir William Collins, fell with shrewish anger. But he made an utterly inadequate and evasive reply to the general indictment. He repudiated the French and Carsonite policy of dismembering Germany up to the left bank of the Rhine, and expressed vague dissent from the treaties of partition. But he withheld all statement of a clear alternative, excused himself for failing to answer the Pope's Peace Note by alleging that Germany had not answered it either, and hinted that it was difficult to set up a League of Nations because pre-war Germany had always opposed internationalism. The debate, as it developed, showed an overwhelming preponderance of opinion for a re-statement of policy, Mr. J. W. Wilson, a representative and much-respected member, saying plainly that his further support depended on it. The House shrank visibly from the odious speeches and repellent personality of Sir Edward Carson, and it is clear that if the Government gives itself to him,

and to the mere violence of Mr. George, it will go down for want not merely of Liberal support but of the best type of Conservative.

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Why therefore cannot the Government give a plain answer to plain questions? Sir William Collins's speech, and the powerful supporting argument of the Liberal and Tory Moderates, and notably of Mr. Runciman, were in effect inquiries whether the earlier ideal statements of war aims—that the war was fought to end war, to enthrone public right, and to secure the sanction of international law for small and great nations alike—had been superseded by the gross materialism which Imperialist Russia continued to foist on to the diplomatic scheme of the Allies. The critics got no answer at all from Mr. Balfour, and from Lord Robert Cecil the satisfactory, but limited answer, that, personally, he strongly favored a League of Nations from which *eventually* Germany would not be excluded (he said nothing of the Government as a whole), and that he did not believe in an economic war after war. Only there must be victory first. Lord Robert did not say how much victory or what kind of victory he expected, or within what limit of time he hoped to secure it. But these are obvious riders to his main proposition. On Thursday the Prime Minister added a speech which reverted somewhat to his more moderate Glasgow utterance, and repeated its offer to submit the future of the German colonies to the Peace Conference.

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We suggest that the Government should be called on definitely to say—

1. Whether they favor a forced territorial settlement or a settlement based on a solemn INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE AND COVENANT TO MAKE AND KEEP THE PEACE, subject to complete freedom and reparation for Belgium and Serbia and such territorial adjustments as can be arranged in a World Council, to be set up, if the Central Powers agree, as soon as a general armistice can be arranged?

2. Whether they propose to drop or to retain the policy of an economic war?

3. Whether, if they are prepared to repudiate an economic war and to invite a World Conference, they will call on Germany to say in terms whether, on her part, she repudiates a policy of annexations and encroachment?

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MR. GEORGE has added a fresh speech to his knock-out series. The last of them points to an end of the war in 1919 rather than 1918. But it contained no indication of its aims, or of the means by which the speaker hopes to attain the crushing military victory he suggests. Describing Germany as a "criminal" and "bandit" nation, which had committed "murder, arson, rape, burglary, fraud, piracy"—he declared that such States would always exist until their crimes were made unprofitable. The unprofitability of war is, we imagine, a lesson that has been equally impressed on all the nations—

guilty and innocent—not least on Germany herself. But Mr. George omitted to say what form of punishment he regarded as adequate; whether economic or political or military. In other words, he suggested no policy whatever. Ideas of re-settlement—"new treaties," "Leagues of Nations," "understandings," "disarmament," "arbitration," "security," were mere "blessed phrases" unless they followed "victory"—which, again, he failed to define. The material prospect was very slightly sketched. The Western lines must be defended, and there must be a free "army of manœuvre" for unspecified points on the "colossal battlefield." But success depended ultimately on tonnage, that is to say, on the factor which a few days ago Mr. George wrote out of the account. Meanwhile, the nation must strip barer for the fight, and "grousing," i.e., criticism of Mr. George, must be discouraged. "Blessed phrases" indeed! The German Chancellor retorted on the speech that Germany could not be expected to negotiate with statesmen who regarded her as a bandit.

A DEFINITE armistice for a lunar month has been concluded for all fronts between Russia and Germany. As between these two belligerents the terms read equally enough. The good intentions suggested in the provision forbidding transfers of troops, unless they had already begun on the date of signature, are not likely to avail us much. Germany began the transfer of troops to the West promptly; moreover the treaty may be consistent with the "combing out" of younger men from the units which remain in the East. The Bolsheviks have got their own way about fraternization, which is to be tolerated under very closely regulated conditions. Postal and commercial intercourse is to be resumed, subject to conditions yet to be defined. The Bolsheviks are here thinking probably of propaganda by post, the Germans of the resumption of business or the purchase of articles which the blockade has rendered scarce. A curious clause pledges both Turkey and Russia to withdraw their troops from Persia, whose neutrality is to be recognized. Evidently the Germans are interested in the future of Persia.

NEGOTIATIONS for peace are to follow at once, and Counts Hertling and Czernin, with Herr von Kühlmann, are going to the Eastern Headquarters. Trotsky, in the customary communication to the Press, reminds the former Allies that they have still time to prevent a separate by making a general peace. Herr Scheidemann is once more in Stockholm, perhaps to further Russo-German negotiations, perhaps to promote the revived project for a Stockholm Conference. Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks have scored a success by procuring from London an undertaking to reconsider the case of the interned Russians in England, MM. Tchitcherin and Petrov (two Russian Socialists of high character who ought never to have been interned, and whose release was pleaded in a brave and eloquent letter by Dr. Hagberg Wright). In return they will allow the departure of British subjects from Russia.

THE central interest of the Russian situation turns on the attitude of Lenin's Government towards the Constituent Assembly. Though they have interfered with the preliminary meetings of the few deputies already in Petrograd, and have occupied the Tauris Palace with Bolshevik troops, they do not dare to forbid it altogether. They have, however, arrested all or most of the Cadet leaders and deputies on a charge of conspiring with General Kaledin, and are also said to have ordered the Bolshevik deputies to leave Petrograd. Trotsky announces an unrelenting war upon the Cadets, remarks that the present terror is a mild foretaste of what is to come, and even threatens the use of the guillotine in a month's time. Terror by time-table is something distinctly worse than the hot-blooded horrors of 1792. But this person talks loosely, and has already explained away his words: we do not think the guillotine congenial to the Russian temper. The Peasants' Congress so resented the threat that it shouted him down. This rage against the Cadets is hard to explain, for they do not

seem to be politically formidable. The figures of deputies actually elected are now 162 Revolutionary Socialists, 96 Bolsheviks, and only 13 Cadets. This is nearly half the Assembly. One supposes that Lenin and Trotsky are not really afraid of the Cadets, but that they seek by starting a violent class-war to gain a pretext for ignoring or destroying the Assembly. They have flung away all pretence of democracy, and set up in its stead the "dictatorship of the proletariat." The proletariat, however, or the peasant part of it, seems to prefer the leadership of Tchernoff's party.

WHILE the class-war and a sort of terror rage in Petrograd and the great Russian towns, the big non-Russian fringe seems untouched by the Bolshevik fury, and is organizing to defy it. The Ukraine has elected deputies who are almost exclusively Social Revolutionary, and 150 of them have met in Kiev. It is even proposed that the All-Russian Constituent Assembly may meet there. The Caucasus goes its own way under the leadership of M. Tchaidze, and does not seem to be included in the armistice. Siberia has also its own non-Bolshevik Provisional Government. These Socialist but non-Bolshevik autonomous units may soon be openly at war with Petrograd, for Trotsky has sent an ultimatum to the Ukraine on the ground that it is making common cause with General Kaledin's Cossacks. The Cossacks seem to be faring ill in the Don district against the naval contingent and the Red Guards. Finland has demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops, and the Swedish population of the strategically important Åland Isles has expelled the Russian garrison, and demands union with Sweden. It is the dissolution of Russia which is in process, and the Bolsheviks seem determined to prevent the very event which could arrest it—the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. There is, however, one hopeful aspect in the situation. If civil war does result between Bolshevik Great Russia and the rest of what was once the Russian Empire, it will not be fought on the issue of reaction *versus* revolution. It will be a war between the moderate Constitutional Socialists and the Extremists.

THE results of the Canadian Elections, though not fully reported as we write, show that Sir Robert Borden and his Coalition Government have secured a substantial majority of not less, and probably considerably more, than 40 in a House of 235 members. Broadly speaking, the British communities of Ontario and the mixed settlers in the Middle and Far West have given solid support to the Government, while Quebec, with its French inhabitants, has been equally solid against the Government, the Maritime Provinces being divided. Ontario's 82 seats give 70 for the Government, and the West 50 for and only three against. Quebec returns 62 out of 65 for Sir W. Laurier and Bourassa. When the soldiers' votes come in, it is believed that the Government majority will be substantially increased. Since Sir R. Borden made conscription his sole basis of appeal, he can claim that Canada as a whole gives a strong endorsement to his policy.

SIR ROBERT BORDEN's tactics were strong. He had detached from Sir Wilfrid Laurier a powerful body of Liberal support, especially in Ontario and the grain-growing West, and though the veteran Liberal leader strove to hold his moderate English-speaking and his French followers together by the middle course of a proposal for a special referendum on conscription, the considerable delay this course would have involved doubtless told heavily against him. Moreover, Sir R. Borden, by offering further representation in his Government both to Liberals and to Labor, managed to convey to the country in general the idea of a united national administration. Quebec, however, presents a very grave problem. There is little reason to believe that these strongly isolated communities will readily accept the voice of the Dominion. Thus far the actual operation of the Military Service Act has been eased by the very liberal exemptions of the Tribunals. But when the pressure for man-power is urged upon them, it is not unlikely to encounter a



sullen and stubborn opposition. It may even be questioned whether the actual number of troops available for shipment overseas will be larger than could have been obtained by a voluntary appeal to the Imperial sentiment of the Canadian nation. This racial and local fissure is a heavy price to pay for compulsion.

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THE Standing Committees of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Congress have revised their declaration of war aims for use at the Stockholm Conference, to whose eventual meeting they are still committed. The document wisely throws into high relief the general conditions of a settlement which will "make the world safe for democracy." It puts first the League of Nations, with obligatory arbitration or mediation, and we rejoice to see that it adds to its first draft the general abolition of conscription. It is equally emphatic about economic peace, opposes the "war after war," and boldly demands that tariffs should be imposed for revenue only. It introduces a rather detailed survey of desirable territorial changes, with the stipulation that the war must not be "prolonged a single day once the conditions of a permanent peace can be secured merely for the sake of extending the boundaries of any state." These readjustments must be reached "by common agreement on the general principle of allowing all people to settle their own destinies." It emphasizes the *plébiscite* for Alsace and repudiates all Imperialist annexations in Turkey. For Tropical Africa it proposes not merely international control but international administration—the latter, we think, a risky extension, which promises not gain but confusion to colonies like Nigeria, which are already well administered. But international control is essential, and with it disappears the objection to a deal over the German colonies. The whole Labor Movement is now committed to an international settlement as against an Imperialist settlement, to the Lansdowne letter as against the secret treaties.

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A LULL has set in on the Western Front, and on the Italian Front there is something approaching equilibrium. The measure of the struggle here has sunk to that of Verdun. Since the 11th the Austrians and Germans have been concentrating on the section of the line between the Brenta and the Piave, and recently the greatest tension has been felt north-east of Monte Grappa, which is not far from the British sector of the line. A German Jaeger division, thrown on Monday against Monte Solarolo, was thrown back with heavy loss. The German report which deals with the operation makes no mention of this reverse, but states that the Austro-Hungarians achieved an undefined success. It is certain that so far such successes as have been won recently on this sector of the front have fallen to the Austro-Hungarians, who, on the 14th, captured Col Caprile, just east of the Brenta. The Germans who disappeared from the Piave front have, as was expected, made their reappearance on the Brenta-Piave sector; but the Italians are making a stubborn resistance, and inflicting heavy losses on the storming troops. The weather is as bitter as it can be, and it seems hardly probable that the Austro-German offensive will be continued much longer. It has attempted to storm or turn Mount Grappa, the final defence of the Brenta-Piave sector, for a month, and has only succeeded in making small advances on the flanks of the mountain.

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THE many changes rung by the Government on their specifics for victory have at length converged on "shipping." This is Mr. Lloyd George's newest discovery, following his earlier revelation that the question had ceased to exist. Lord Rhondda announces that the scarcity of food is due to the new arrangements with France and Italy. But it is finally due to the submarine campaign, which is still not in hand. It is well known that the losses in shipping are not being made good; but the extent of the deficit is unknown, and unless the Govern-

ment are regularly nagged on the question they seem incapable of rising to its seriousness. We may have every admiration for the efficiency of the patrol craft without feeling that all is being done that is possible. The naval war is still much more of a defensive operation than it ought to be. We have no properly constituted and actively functioning naval Staff, and we doubt whether the effort to constitute it has really been encouraged.

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TAKE, for instance, the two naval raids. One of these was announced by the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the other was the subject of a question in the House. Both occurred on Wednesday week; but they were not announced until Monday. Neither episode can be considered satisfactory. It is, of course, almost impossible to ensure the safety of all the convoys across the seas, since this could only be achieved by providing them with fleets large enough to deal with any force that might be encountered. Some chances must be taken, even in the regular policing of the North Sea. But the fact that another convoy of neutral vessels has been sent to the bottom sufficiently near Norway for the crews to be landed safely on the south coast near Flekkefjord has a serious bearing upon our shipping problem. The Norwegian sailors have shown a splendid spirit in the face of the risks they encounter by crossing the North Sea; but we can hardly expect them to continue their perilous voyages when to the perils from the submarines are added others from surface craft. These must seem to neutrals preventable risks if our Navy is as supreme as we assert it to be, and as they themselves have so often proclaimed it.

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THE shipping lost amounted to 8,000 tons, a serious enough matter, but not all that the Germans stand to put out of action by their raid. They are playing for the moral effect of the episode, and this, unfortunately, will be heightened by the knowledge that the protecting force was not on the scene of action in time to prevent the destruction of the convoy. The action between the two British destroyers and the four German destroyers and some cruisers took place about noon. One British destroyer was sunk and some of its crew were taken prisoners, while the other was disabled but managed to limp home. The Germans escaped before the British cruiser squadron could come up. The other engagement took place in the early hours of the same morning. Two neutral merchantmen and one steam fishing-trawler were sunk and a steam fishing-trawler was damaged a few miles off a north-east coast port by German destroyers. Such episodes must occasionally mark the sea warfare. But both are part of the general problem of naval policy. The Germans have shown much resource and skill in their scheme of warfare, and the answer to it should be the work of the freshest brains available.

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THE debate on the Reform Bill in the Lords was prefaced by an impressive petition in favor of women's suffrage, which bore the signature of seventy-seven peeresses. On the same day the "Times" cut down to a few lines a long letter of despairing protest from Mrs. Humphry Ward, who once could make unlimited use of its space. Lord Salisbury and Lord Bryce spoke for the sex-conservatism of both parties. Lord Bryce referred to the state of Russia as an argument against enfranchising women. Is he, we wonder, an ardent Bolshevik? It is that party which seeks to prevent the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, elected by universal suffrage. Lord Bryce joins Lenin in damning an Assembly which has not once met. Lord Sydenham followed on the same lines. Lord Halsbury, on the other hand, while he detests the Bill, will not vote against it, since nothing would induce him to remove Mr. Lloyd George from power. We hope that statesman relishes the compliment. Viscount Chaplin was equally loyal—racing goes on as usual. Judging by these symptoms we should say that the Bill is fairly safe. There are signs, meanwhile, that the United States Congress is really likely to pass a federal suffrage amendment next month.

## Politics and Affairs.

### THE POWER OF DARKNESS.

"This is your hour, and the power of darkness."

THE intelligent reader of Mr. Lloyd George's speech in Gray's Inn will quickly arrive at one interpretation of it. Be its argument good or bad, its mentality is clear. It is the utterance of a man who has no belief in an early end of the war. Lord Curzon recently described Mr. George as an "optimist." But an optimist who declares the enemy's defence in the chief military theatre to be "impenetrable," and regards our action against him as essentially one of defence, while he calls for an "army of manœuvre" to play on some new unspecified point of the vast battlefield, ranges over a wide space of time, and sees, or thinks he sees, a sweeping solution of polity. The journey is long: Mr. George chooses one companion for it. Force, and force alone, is to be the solvent. Ideas he waves aside, the moral notions, such as "disarmament," "arbitration," "the League of Nations"—together with the merely prudential ones, such as the search for "security." It would follow, as Lord Buckmaster argues,\* that even if we could get the terms we want to-day, we must not stretch out our hand to take them. We are not even to restate our conditions of peace, though the secret treaties reduced the war to a game of grab, and abolished the clear moral distinction which existed between the Germany and the Alliance of 1914. Till the military issue declares itself, all these things are irrelevant, and the nations must nerve themselves to endure not only the famine of bread that awaits them, but a "famine of hearing the word of the Lord." Though autocracy and democracy are supposed to be at strife, and their thoughts to be as far apart as light from darkness, both issue the same order of the day, and employ the same power of authority and influence, military and civil, to enforce it. "Silence!"

This power of darkness has fallen on a world which, while it has never ceased to discuss the original causes of its disagreement, finds itself increasingly deprived of all unofficial means of ending it. Its press, the peculiar child of its character, is no more than a machine for arresting the normal exchange of thought and information. Swift and free world-travel is almost its invention; it has ceased. International trade moves in an ever-narrowing pathway between the mines and the guns. The war has even destroyed the Victorian poet's unhappy picture of a society in which men "sit and hear each other groan." Men groan indeed; but they neither hear the voice of suffering nor could they relieve it if they did. It is computed that fifteen million people have already been killed in the war. Russia puts her own loss at five millions. But these are casual computations. The sufferings of vast tracts of Eastern Europe and Asia are almost entirely hidden from our eyes. The American Commission, which was allowed to visit certain districts of Poland, declared that they were bare of children under seven years of age, that is to say, of those born during the war or shortly before it. We shall never know the story of the Armenian massacres, and it may take generations to restore the populations of nearer Asia to the modest level they had attained in 1914. The same nescience veils the myriad acts of individual suffering. The physical agony of a single soldier who has been badly wounded by shrapnel cannot be imagined even by the woman who loves him best; yet we must multiply it many

millionfold if we are to make even a mental calculation of the mass of avoidable pain (to say nothing of disease and mental distress) which the war has caused in the fighting armies alone. Yet man, as his poetry, science, and religion show, is an extremely sympathetic creature, hates to see a dog die in pain, and has given himself hundreds of times over in the effort to make his fellow's life a little longer or more easeful. Civilized man is like this. It is his practice, the thing he lives by. And he would like to resume this natural and Christian relationship—even with his enemies, when he can cease to think of them vindictively. But he cannot. By reason of the immense area of the struggle, the obscurity and complexity of the political issues that are constantly arising in it, the limited mentality of our statesmen, and the embargo which war maintains on religion, reason, and social service, it seems almost impossible to devise a sure, speedy, *organizable* means of rescue from it. Thus, while the will to war recedes in correspondence with the decline of the material forces that sustain it, the will to peace suffers, too, by the weakness and even the growing atrophy of man's soul. "Are we not lost?" ask the doubters. "How can these broken communities ever be restored? Who will undertake to govern them, tax them, moderate them, lacking as each one is in the true repairing stuff of social unity? Will not the Russian anarchy spread till it overwhelms us all?"

Yet it is in the act of asking this most perplexing question of all the Sphinx's problems of the war that we begin to see the answer to it. Mr. Edward Carpenter has said with truth that the war arose not merely from the enmity between one group of nations and another, but from the seed of enmity which each nation bore in its own bosom. The war was ordered by rich and old men, and in the main has been fought by young and poor ones. But unnatural as that division of functions must seem to every just and good man, it is in itself the expression of a deep moral fissure in the fabric of the modern State. It is the love of power which has brought the world to this pass; the power of one class over the life of another class, passing into the ambition of the most materialized of all the European societies to exercise this power over all its rivals. Christian thinkers have often liked to reflect that it was slavery which brought the first great European Imperialism to the ground. Has its successor banished slavery? When war broke out, every great commercial city in the world was the moving wheel of some tremendous engine of economic power. What measure of liberty was likely to be left to the workpeople under a system which put every natural agent of man's physical needs, and therefore every avenue of his labor, under a few hundred men sitting in Board Rooms in London or Johannesburg, in Berlin or New York? Internationalism in supply and manufacture is necessary and right. But beneath the internationalized capital of our times has lain something very like national slavery—expressed as over-work, under-pay, bad housing, industrial disease. Its masters were absolutely distrustful of each other, and one after another of their crowning acts of exploitation—in North and South Africa and in the Far East—all but ended in general war. They could not make a just and peaceful division of the world's rich inheritance; for they conceived of power as force, pursued it (with the help of their Governments) in mutual jealousy, and based it on the essential subjugation of the general will and mass of mankind—black, white, or yellow. Thus Industry, which should unite men, divided them. Wealth, which should be the sign of a fuller general life, became merely the

\* In the "Star" of December 14th.



symbol of a grasping and restless one, and Science, which is the victory of reason, overthrew it.

Is there, then, no element of hope, no possible and available service of rescue for society? There is. It is not a matter of small significance that the class which, with some exceptions, has spoken of the war with most sense and moderation is that which has suffered most from it, and had least to do with bringing it about. That class consists of the real workpeople of the world. It consists, too, of the theorists, hard and mistaken as many of them have been, who have busied themselves most with the social problem. Even from those strange Russian Bolsheviks has come an act which, with all its roughness and inconsiderate haste, has rent the veil of that Temple of Secrecy where much of the world's worst work and meanest worship have been accomplished. But behind the Bolsheviks stand forces which are not merely more moderate, but more humane and more serviceable. We do not under-rate the task of Liberal Europe and America in reducing to reason the wild dreams of Nationalism and Imperialism. But Liberalism is no longer a direct weapon of democracy, and since its decline in Western thought, something in closer touch with the first needs and realities of man's life has come into being. Even at this stage of the war, it would be possible to imagine half-a-dozen Labor Cabinets meeting in Conference and bringing it to an end in a month. If such a work of salvage is possible, and we believe it is, the world is likely to have recourse to it. Even in this dim hour, the moral work of preparation for peace has opened. The civilian populations, who do not know what war is, are only beginning to be touched by it. But from the armies, martyrs of the desecrated Church of Humanity, visibly proceeds the seed of her renewal. For the armies come from the peoples and will return to them. A thousand witnesses exist to show that from their much-tried ranks the Spirit of Reason and Reconciliation has once more arisen in the soul of man, and will become flesh, as of old, in the inspired thought of the cottage and the workshop.

#### GERMAN POLICY IN RUSSIA.

For the second time in a decade European statecraft is confronted with the problem of dealing with revolution on a great scale. Our diplomacy has failed in Russia as it failed in Turkey. The Russian Progressives, like the Young Turks, turned instinctively to us as the historical pioneers of liberty, for sympathy and support. We had all the cards in our hands, and in both our rulers chose to fling away the great gift of a people's friendship. In both instances the root of our mistake was a singular obstinacy, based apparently on social and personal prejudices, which led our diplomatists to place their trust in one little group of rather old-fashioned politicians, who never had the chance or the capacity to lead a popular revolution. To its credit our diplomacy was never on easy terms with the Palace Camarilla, either in Turkey or in Russia. Its men were the aged Anglophil pashas, dating from the cleaner pre-Hamidian period, Kiamil Pasha first among them. In Russia its men were the Liberal-Conservatives, MM. Miliukoff and Gutchkoff and General Korniloff. It cold-shouldered the Russian Socialists of all schools, as it despised the Young Turks, and in the end it was left without a friend in power, while its neglect brought about the elimination of the more moderate Socialists and the more liberal Young Turks. As a study in incompetence this record would be hard to beat. The parallel in Germany's case is no less close. In each case the Revolution shattered the basis of German influence, and in each case she adjusted herself and recovered her ground within a few months. She had allied herself with the camarilla of Yildiz, a

profitable and immoral policy. In Russia her influence rested entirely on the Empress, Rasputin, Protopopoff, and their like—again a paying policy, so long as those degenerates ruled. The Revolution in both cases left her friendless, unpopular, and discredited. She had the intelligence to adapt herself. She wasted no regret on her old friends. It was Mr. Bonar Law, and not the Chancellor, who shed a public tear for the late Tsar. She encouraged her Socialists to "fraternise." She adopted the Russian peace formula—doubtless with unspoken reserves. She will go on, we imagine, as she has begun. In both countries she pursues primarily economic ends, and she will no more try to restore Tsardom than she tried to restore the Sultan's theocracy. She will deal with Lenin and Trotsky as she dealt with Enver and Talaat, and it will not disconcert her that the new men play the diplomatic game by singular and original rules. If Lenin should fall, we do not doubt that she will adapt herself again, and treat as cheerfully with social revolutionaries, or even with Cadets, as she deals to-day with Bolsheviks. There is a kind of naïve honesty in the way in which our diplomatists indulge their personal preferences for well-mannered old-world Pashas, or for English-speaking Cadet leaders. But one must feel very secure in the world to allow oneself this luxury. Their selection was in both cases as unwise as it was undemocratic, but the prime mistake was to attach our cause to any one group at all. The realism of German methods is cynical, but we shall do well to note that it is intelligent, and may happen to prosper in Russia as it prospered in Turkey.

German statecraft has now two problems before it in dealing with Russia. It naturally wishes to make the best use of its conquests—Poland, Courland, and Lithuania—but equally it looks beyond them to the vast reaches of Great Russia, and Russian Asia, so thinly peopled, so rich in natural resources, so temptingly in need of foreign capital and industrial organization. A shortsighted, mail-fisted statesman of the Tirpitz School would probably grab the conquests, and in the act lose the chance of any friendly "penetration" of Russia. Count Hertling and Herr von Kühlmann are not of that school, and they will not make that mistake. Their policy was outlined with apparent frankness in Count Hertling's last speech to the Reichstag, in which he announced the receipt of the Bolshevik proposals:—

"We desire nothing better than to return to the old neighborly relations with Russia especially in the economic field. As regards the territories formerly under the sceptre of the Tsar, Poland, Lithuania and Courland, we respect the right of their populations to decide their own destinies (*Selbstbestimmungsrecht*). We expect that they will choose for themselves a political form and constitution which corresponds to their circumstances, and to the tendencies of their civilization."

This summary view of the two problems suggests that Count Hertling realizes their inter-connection. If he wants to get into close economic relations with Russia, it is obvious that he must not begin by offending Russian sentiment and violating Russian principles in regard to Poland, Courland, and Lithuania. It is not at all an exacting public with which he has to deal. Two distinct classes of Russians cared to maintain the Imperial sway over these provinces: the bureaucrats who exploited them, and the small group of Liberal-Conservatives of the Miliukoff-Gutchkoff school, who really do care about the greatness and extent of Russia. The rest of the country would no more object to their "cutting the painter" than an Early Victorian English Liberal would have done in a like case. The only reserve which sober progressive Russians used to make was that the possession of Riga, an ice-free port, was for them essential. On this, M. Terestchenko laid great stress on the eve of Kerensky's fall. These provinces have no Russian resident population, and by religion and civilization they belong to the West.

On the other hand, it would be a fatal blow to the prestige of the Bolsheviks, and an offence to the whole revolutionary movement in Russia, if Germany were to assert a crude right of conquest over these populations. In one way or another, by constituent assemblies, if

not by referenda, the people of Poland, Courland, and Lithuania will probably be left (in form at least) to decide their own destiny. Appearances at least will be saved, though it may turn out that there are some serious limitations to the free choice of these peoples. Thus, in November, 1916, the Poles were promised a Kingdom (a Republic being thus ruled out), and the whole tenor of the proclamation suggested a close military and dynastic tie. A good deal has happened since then, more especially the Russian Revolution, and the Bolsheviks, who have a will of their own and a rough way of formulating it, may conceivably secure somewhat better terms for these provinces. None of these populations are pro-German, but neither are they pro-Russian, and in present circumstances they may not feel much desire to put themselves under the Russian flag—though we note that the Lettish regiments (from Courland) are Bolshevik. Count Hertling may have to meet difficulties from the Junkers and the High Command if he consents to an honest application of the principle of "self-determination." But left to itself, it is quite possible that the Government and the Reichstag majority would risk a good deal for the greater prize of a friendly Russia. They will not find Russia, at the best, an easy sphere to "penetrate." Germans are unpopular, by reason of their good, as well as their bad, qualities. The dreamy, undisciplined Slav temper dislikes German method, punctuality, and order as much as it dislikes German harshness and cynicism. The old association with Rasputin and the Tsardom will not be easily forgotten, nor in a country involved in a class war is the foreign financier and capitalist likely to fare better than the native. The adventure might be abandoned as too difficult if the rest of the world stood open to German trade. As things are to-day, we imagine that for German "real politics" the prospect of securing access to the Russian supplies of grain, metals, oil, leather, and cotton will outweigh every other consideration. The Bolsheviks may not be such innocents as some of their critics suppose. They have scrapped the Army (which, anyhow, was nearly useless), but they have some valuable cards to bargain with if they know the game.

We know more of the German-Austrian plans in regard to the Eastern frontier on the eve of the truce than we know of their subsequent evolution. It seems that after long and none too amicable bargaining, Berlin and Vienna came provisionally to terms. Lithuania and Courland, with some form of domestic autonomy (whether real or illusory we do not know) were to fall to the German sphere of influence. The Kingdom of Poland (minus the northernmost Suwalki country) was to enjoy "the Austrian solution." It was to be united to Galicia, and created an autonomous kingdom under the Hapsburg Crown, in a personal union with Austria and Hungary. The scheme, if it was really completed, was soon officially repudiated, and if not finally abandoned, was at least postponed. No one was really pleased with it, except the Austrian Poles. The German Junkers growled that Austria was getting too much. The German Progressives protested in the name of the "self-determination of nationalities," invoked the Reichstag resolution, and asked how Germany, if she made a *fait accompli* of this type, could face the Peace Conference. In the Dual Monarchy the Magyars and the Tchechs, for opposite reasons, were equally discontented, and Vienna realized once more how infinitely difficult is any organic change in the Hapsburg complex.

Among relative solutions, in a world where one learns to endure the lesser evil, there might be a worse fate for Poland. It would enjoy as much real independence as Hungary (which is often rather too much), and there is no doubt that numbers of Poles would accept it with comparative contentment. The Poles have suffered too much devastation and starvation to face any needless prolongation of the war on the chance that it might possibly bring to the remnants of their race the full realization of their ideal of independence and re-union. It is exiles like M. Dmowski, whose following in Poland is small and mostly reactionary, who stand out for the unattainable. This solution ought logically to lead to the concession of an equal autonomous status

to the North Slavs (Tchechs and Slovaks) and to the South Slavs (Slovenes, Serbs, and Croats). If the Hapsburgs were to make this big extension to the North, it would become feasible to secure from them concessions for other races, even if they involved the loss of territory. We need hardly say, however, that "the Austrian solution" could be taken into account only if the Poles themselves, by referendum or through a Constituent Assembly, were to declare for it; and, in any case, the problem of Polish nationality is a matter for Europe as a whole, and not for one group of Powers only, to consider and decide. The case of Courland and Lithuania is much more difficult. They are too weak to stand quite unprotected. We are under no obligation to see restored the whole Imperial territory of Russia, no do we think, if Riga were made a free port, that Russia would suffer by losing these neglected and unassimilable territories. On the other hand, we are bound to object to any increase in the military man-power of the German Empire, and any exclusive commercial privileges. To what Germany may gain for herself in the East by intelligence and organization and propinquity, in fair competition against the rest of us, we can raise no objection. But exclusions and preferences spell danger to the world's peace. A League of Nations alone might secure real independence for those weak States. We can make no final judgment on the Eastern Settlement until we know into what general framework it will fit. Our statecraft has so far been badly outmatched. It can retrieve itself now only by forwarding a good general settlement. The sort of peace which Count Hertling and the Bolsheviks may arrange could only avoid lasting harm to the world if it were followed by general disarmament and economic peace.

#### THE QUAKER TESTIMONY.

THE short statement made by the executive body of the Society of Friends of their intention to refuse compliance with the leaflet regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act might well induce the Government to pause and to reconsider an attitude which in so meek a people has evoked such a defiance. For the Quakers are not taking their stand upon the doctrine of individual rights as commonly interpreted, or upon any merely political interpretation of human liberty. Nor is their appeal to that doctrine of high expediency so powerfully set forth by J. S. Mill, in which the perils attending all judgments and policies not exposed to a full, free current of criticism are made manifest. Their objection to the censorship of opinion takes even deeper ground. For it takes direct issue with the spirit of Prussianism which animates the official policy, and which is in itself so plain a contradiction of the very purpose for which we profess to be contending with our arms. For Prussianism in essence does not consist in the supremacy of military force, but in the assertion of the arbitrary will of the State as paramount over the mind and will of the men and women who form the nation.

Now, it is intelligible that a State, like our own, setting out in plain sincerity to break the Prussianism of another State, should in the course of doing so be drawn by piece-meal expediency to adopt, temporarily, as it may suppose, some portions of that policy. The adoption of compulsory military service was, of course, the plainest admission of this alliance with Beelzebub for the casting out of devils. The flagrant violation of the Conscience Clause in the administration of the Military Service Act, which has led to the imprisonment of many young Friends, is the least defensible of many incidents in the endeavor of our State to take on Prussianism. The assault in these cases is upon the individual conscience, whose obligation to refuse to kill it violates. But in this new attack upon freedom of speech and publication it is not only the private, but the collective conscience of the Society that is violated. The language in which the duty of the Society finds expression deserves attention. For it comes to closer grips with the evil spirit of Prussianism than any other we have heard or read. "It is for Christians a paramount duty to be

free to obey, and to act and speak in accordance with the law of God, *a law higher than that of any State*, and no government official can release men from this duty." To unsympathetic readers, ignorant of the deeper meaning of these words, it may appear as a mere setting up on the part of private individuals of their own will and discretion against the larger will and fuller discretion of the Government; or, in other words, a crude declaration of anarchy. But those who understand the history of Quakerism and the spirit which, from the times of George Fox to the present day, has consistently directed its worship and its conduct of life, will form a very different judgment of the present protest. It is not that Quakers believe themselves to be in possession of any special light or power of spiritual direction denied to other communions or other bodies of their fellow-citizens. But they are convinced believers in a divine inspiration accessible to every heart which lays itself open to its reception, and when clearly manifested, of paramount authority in the direction of their utterances and conduct.

This is no peculiar tenet of any religious sect. It is the nominal profession of every Church that its members are in some sort of spiritual contact with a divine presence, which lays upon their souls obligations whose sanctity is entitled to override all human authority. Lord Hugh Cecil, in language of grave eloquence, startled a worldly house of politicians a few weeks ago by the firm enunciation of this truth, and reduced to ashamed silence its many groups of professing Christians. When the inner history of this crisis in our spiritual life is written, it will be the chief condemnation of our Churches that so few voices have been raised in defence of that spiritual liberty which underlies all other liberties, and the betrayal of which is treason against the vital principle, not of this Church or that, not even of this religion or of that, but of every free Church and of every spiritual religion. For a Church, or a Churchman who admits that he subjects the absolute direction of his voice, thought, and conduct, in matters of moral and spiritual import, to State orders, substitutes a secular official God for the divine governor of the Universe. In point of fact, no earnest man, of whatever creed, or of no creed, would make such a formal avowance of complete surrender to his Government. If he consults faithfully his heart he will always find some limit to his loyalty to his State, some acts which, if ordered, he would refuse to do. There are no Englishmen who will not avow that they have a right to their opinions, few who will not assert a further right to the expression of those opinions. The Society of Friends, as we understand them, go further, and translate this right into an obligation imposed upon them in all serious concerns by the source from which these opinions or convictions are derived. No one who has attended a Friends' meeting can fail to have been impressed by the sincerity of this conviction of the inner light which moves their members to stand forth and bear testimony. No doubt the personal factor of self-assertion may sometimes give a false prompting or blur the message. But when allowance for human weakness is made, the sense of spiritual direction remains unimpaired.

What is true of the spoken is also true of the written word. To fail in response to either prompting is an act of spiritual cowardice, which injures both the personality and the community. Nor can it be objected that the State restrictions apply to matters which lie outside that higher direction. To tell the Society of Friends that expressions of their sincere convictions upon Peace and War are to be subjected to the selection or repression of some official in a Government Office, on the ground that these matters belong to politics and do not touch the religious life, is not only to assert a separation between the religious and the secular, the falsity of which is recognized by every spiritual nature, but in the case of Quakers it is a direct denial of the most cardinal point in their historic life.

It is this deep and sorrowful conviction that must have induced their Executive Body to make the dignified announcement embodied in their resolution. "We realize the rarity of the occasions on which a body of citizens find their sense of duty to be in conflict with the

law, and it is with a sense of the gravity of the decision that the Society of Friends must on this occasion act contrary to the regulation and continue to issue literature on war and peace without submitting it to the Censor. It is convinced that in thus standing for spiritual liberty it is acting in the best interests of the nation." This, we repeat, is no act of legal defiance. The Quakers are law-abiding citizens of no ordinary strictness. In every city or community where they live they are foremost in active contribution to every cause, moral, intellectual, or material, which makes for the welfare of their fellow-citizens, and even in this war, though few have felt able to participate in the actual conflict, their deeds of mercy and of bodily and spiritual aid to its broken and starving victims have earned the admiration and the gratitude of all who know their works. We cannot believe that any Government, in a country still claiming to be Christian and to be fighting for spiritual liberty, will lightly undertake to bear down by brute force the calm but perfectly indomitable spirit which breathes through this memorable little document. Such an attempt would be too patent a surrender to the forces of evil which we still aver that we are out to crush.

#### TOMKINS REDIVIVUS.

[Being a fragment from a speech "For the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing" made before the "Whitefriars" on December 5th last by the Right Hon. Augustine Birrell, M.P.]

It has often given me a little needful relaxation whilst reading "Paradise Lost" to recall the fact that the first man on whom was cast the *duty* of reading this famous epic *all through* (for Ellwood read the manuscript in 1665 for pleasure and from friendship) was a clerical gentleman of the name of Tomkins—Thomas Tomkins, who in 1666-67 chanced to be Archbishop Sheldon's Chaplain and Deputy Licensor of Poetry, whether amatorious or majestic.

Oliver Cromwell, when he came into his own, abolished the Twenty Presbyterians, who in the early days of the Commonwealth had been constituted State Licensers; and against whom therefore the mighty shafts of the "Areopagitica" (November, 1645) had been hurled with all the force and fury of a demi-god; but the Second Charles, when restored, also restored the Censor, not, we may be sure, in the interest of religion or morality, but for the sake of a quiet, sensible, easy life, and then proceeded to classify literature into subjects; and with that ironical humor of his, which must have made Sir Charles Sedley (the only man in his Royal Master's expressed opinion fit to be "Apollo's Viceroy") scream with laughter and roll on the floor, assigned poetry, in all its branches, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, in his turn, passed the job on to his chaplain.

And so it came about in this exceedingly well-governed universe that some time towards the end of 1666 the manuscript of "Paradise Lost" fell into the hands of Tomkins, whose plain duty it was to sit down and read it all through carefully and with wakeful eyes—for did it not come from a "suspect" quarter? Sir George Cave has lately told us that before he condemned "Young India" he read it from "cover to cover," but "Young India" is a small thing of only 200 pages, and a book very easy to read, even from "cover to cover." Not so "Paradise Lost"!

Some of Milton's biographers, and like most great poets he has had too many, have thought it seemly to poke fun at Tomkins; and yet to be forced, as he was by virtue of his office, to be the first to give judgment upon the effect likely to be produced by the sudden appearance of such a poem as this of Milton's, in such a city as the City of London, in the year 1667, was no joke; and so Tomkins found out as he went on with his reading.

The Archbishop's Chaplain was a highly-educated man, being indeed a Fellow of All Souls, even as are to-day Lord Curzon, Sir John Simon, the Editor (by no means to be confused with the proprietor) of the "Times" newspaper, and many another living pundit,



all of notoriously good taste. What is more, he was a poet on his own account; and as Saint Beuve observes: "Parler des poètes est toujours une chose bien délicate, et surtout quand on l'a été un peu soi-même." It is true that the verses of Tomkins are no longer on our lips, but we may be sure they were frequently on his, and this must, as indeed Saint Beuve in his exquisite French so delicately suggests, have made his task all the more difficult. I am confident that no better equipped man could be found to-day by any government, however well constructed, to consent to discharge the duty of a censor than was, in 1667, this accomplished Fellow of All Souls.

But consider for a moment the situation. On one side we discern the sublime author of the "Areopagitica," blind, baffled, poor, solitary, almost in hiding, in precarious health, and never at the best of times of the sweetest of tempers, feverishly anxious to see the poem he had been for so long composing by night and dictating by day, a poem which he knew, once published, must secure for him that immortality of fame on which he had set his heart since boyhood, well printed and off his mind, ere the "blind fury with abhorred shears" should enter his dark chamber and slit his "thin-spun life." On the other side we see Tomkins in his room in Lambeth House, with the ten books of "Paradise Lost" spread out before him, wondering what his duty was with regard to this puzzling poem, written by a man who, not so many years ago, had made all Europe resound with his "defences" of the murder of a King. Tomkins may have taken his time over the perusal of "Paradise Lost"; but do we not the same? The author, shut up in his perpetual darkness in Artillery Walk, leading to those Bunhill Fields where the author of "The Pilgrim's Progress," another troubled Non-conformist, was soon destined to lie, fretted and fumed, and employing the abusive vocabulary of a Carlyle, inflamed by the genuine passion of a Dante, cursed Tomkins day and night. The chaplain still read on, and the more he read the less he liked. I can well understand it. What made the Censor restive and uncomfortable was not so much a passage up and down, but the revelation in its entirety of the Miltonic spirit, which seemed to him, sitting there in Lambeth, to call up from the vasty deep of Revolution,

"Gorgons, Hydras, and Chimeras dire."

Tomkins was the first to perceive, for I doubt whether the mild Quakerism of the youthful Ellwood saw it clearly, that the real hero of this epic was the Devil, the first of all rebels, and the most successful, for are not half the nations at this moment under his direct domination, and most men vassals of his will? No wonder the Fellow of All Souls was frightened. Why Dr. Johnson, a century later, though he could stomach most things in Literature, disliked this Miltonic spirit; whilst after the passage of yet another century, Mr. Gladstone frankly abhorred it. I cannot bring myself to believe that Sir George Cave, whose famous impartiality is, after all, only a most agreeable mannerism, really "approves" of "Paradise Lost." About Sir Edward Carson I am not so certain, for as David Garrick reminds us in a prologue,

"A fellow feeling makes one wondrous kind."

Returning to Tomkins; he doggedly went on reading a bit every day, and finally, with a groan, passed the book. A long-established tradition, and I am a firm believer in literary traditions, tells us that the lines which continued to trouble him up to the last moment were those famous ones occurring in the first book describing a solar eclipse:—

"As when the sun, re-wisen,  
Looks through the horizontal, misty air,  
Shorn of its beams, or from behind the moon,  
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes Monarchs."

There are still many who deem these lines to be truly glorious, and, for all we knew, Tomkins may have done so, though that is perhaps unlikely, so diverse are they from his own. But Tomkins had nothing to do with glory; his job was Treason. "With fear of change per-

plexing monarchs." What would Charles the Second, who had more intellectual curiosity than all our Monarchs put together (until, of course, the arrival of "the Hanover stem"), think of these lines? Charles feared neither God nor devil, but he was always desperately scared by the bare thought of change. He had lived, even as I have done, cheaply in France. Nor could the Chaplain be expected to forget himself. "How," he must have asked himself, "would change benefit me?" Were the King to be turned out of Hampton Court, that loveliest of palaces, what might not happen to Tomkins's own snug quarters by the shores of the same ancient river? The Chaplain bit his pen and, only half-convinced, signed the "Imprimatur." So have I seen the Chairman of Committees in the High Court of Parliament, when sorely badgered over an amendment, fling himself back, saying: "I am still in doubt on the point of order, but I will give the honorable Member the benefit of it, and now call upon him to move his amendment." After this fashion, and after no other, did "Paradise Lost" appear in 1667 "licensed and entred according to order."

Tomkins died young, in his thirty-seventh year, only surviving by a twelvemonth the great poet whose name alone has kept his alive. According to the D.N.B., he is buried in the chancel of a parish church in Worcestershire. His portrait, if one is extant, should certainly be hung up in the Dining Hall of All Souls; and if no portrait is procurable, it might be well, in order to keep his memory green in his old college, to hang up one of Milton's in its stead. I may observe, whilst passing away from this branch of my subject, that the manuscript of "Paradise Lost" has never been recovered. Would it be worth while looking for it in the grave of Tomkins?

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

DARKLY falls the close of the year, and darker still the eve of the Christian festival. I heard the other day an eloquent preacher pause in a vivid application of Jewish and Christian Apocalypses to the war with a doubting interpretation of the crowning sign of the "abomination of desolation," standing in the place where it should not. My own mind gave a ready answer. What, in the night that has fallen on the world, marks a darker spot than the eclipse of Truth? If all the nations could only exchange their thoughts with candor, even peace would not be far off. But they cannot. Dark veils of sophistry, woven with closer and closer care, check the natural flow of men's minds towards a revealing and eventually a reconciling controversy. That is where Mr. Balfour, with his barren mind, is almost as hopeless as Mr. George, with his shallow one. What is the use of the empty logomachy with which Mr. Balfour conceals our own share in the secret treaties that depraved the original war-aims of the Alliance, and defends his own evasion of the duty of a plain statement by alleging (truthfully enough) the evil example of the German Government? So far as it goes, it is good to hear him repudiate the Franco-Russian bargain of a "free hand" for the Western and Eastern borders of Germany. But why conceal our own acceptance—unwilling, and even forced, as I know it to have been—of compensation for a Russian Constantinople? These were Sazonoff's words of March 5th, 1915:—

"Now that the British Government has given its complete consent in writing to the annexations by Russia of the Straits and Constantinople, within the limits indicated by us, and only demanded security for its economic interests, and a similar benevolent attitude on our part towards the political aspirations of England in other parts."

Well, we are out of this tangle of selfishness. Then why not make a Christmas proclamation, *urbi et orbi*, of the Clean Peace on which every good and merciful man's heart is set?

ONE has so long been accustomed to regard the Prime Minister's speeches as mere fiery stuff thrown recklessly into the furnace of the war—and the world—that the Gray's Inn oration seems quite in the natural order of events. Its audience heard it with coldness; in the country, apart from the gramophonic echoes of his Press, it is widely and profoundly disapproved. It has no ideas. The man who calls in one breath for "an army of manoeuvre"—a kind of roving military commission into the war—declares in the next that the question of transport is supreme. That is to say, we are to make the greatest military demand on transport at a time when the strain on it is most excessive. To what end? It is not even indicated. The soldiers march away; the why and the whither of their toils and journeyings is hidden from them as completely as from the mercenaries of the Thirty Years' War. A statement of terms is difficult? Yes; but it is not attempted. A state of feeling—even of natural and legitimate feeling—is indicated so violently that the German answer comes in the form of a point-blank refusal to have dealings with such statesmanship. But there is no answer to the question of what we want to get out of the war.

It is this fumbling attitude which is creating the incessantly and rapidly growing feeling for a change. Mr. George commands a raging press; he commands little else. I spoke last week of the uncertain and neutral attitude of the Front Opposition Bench. This is now passing into vigilant but not unfair criticism. The Front Bench now discusses and conceals measures with the ablest members of its following in Parliament. But the Parliamentary movement—though it was powerfully and notably strengthened in Wednesday's debate—is still uncertain and nervous; for strange as it may seem, the House of Commons still shrinks a little from the incessant threat of a dissolution. It is stage thunder; for the Reform Bill is almost passed, and the new electorate in sight. Even if it were not, the exclusion of the Army and the Navy would be fatal. Imagine an election to determine the issue of the war, conducted by the men who have not fought in it, to the exclusion of the millions who have! If the House of Commons could only think so, it is perfectly safe from any illicit attempt on itself by tremblers of the Bonar Law persuasion. Its duty is to the nation. And if it would only speak as it thinks, it would hand over control to-morrow to men who were at least moderately competent to exercise it.

"SPLENDID news," cries the "Times," the great organ of anti-Liberalism, announcing the destruction of the Liberal Party in Canada. "Splendid" indeed! I suppose that Sir Wilfrid Laurier is beyond all compare the most distinguished of our Imperial statesmen. In culture, in personal charm and ascendancy, in fineness of temper, no less than in the actual compass of his work for Imperial unity, none of his contemporaries compare with him. Now he is broken. French Canada goes one way, English-speaking and Western Canada another. His service is not indeed over. The great Liberal Moderate will still be wanted to keep Quebec from wilder leadership, and as Canada is plainly for conscription, there is no special point in pressing the demand for a referendum. But whither are we travelling? The madness of the "Morning Post" already presses the Canadian verdict to an Irish extension. "You have got conscription against Canadian Nationalism and Catholicism; now's the time to force it on recalcitrant Ireland" is its argument. Will these hawkers of unholy things never be satisfied? Conscription has divided the Dominions; Australia and New Zealand are in the throes almost equally with Canada. But the "Morning Post" will not be happy till the same confrontation exists in the country where, as it happens, the resisting forces are the strongest and the bitterest.

ONE hears two very conflicting views of the prospects of the Irish Convention. A high official opinion, basing

itself in some degree on Lord Londonderry's friendly and even accommodating tone, inclines to believe that it will arrive at a settlement. I am not so hopeful. The Londonderry movement bases itself on conscription, on which again the invariably unwise Mr. Garvin founds the impossible notion of chopping Home Rule for forced Irish service. That, as anyone familiar with the spirit of the Convention knows, is out of the question. Conscription, if it is ever to come in Ireland, could only arise from a free vote of an Irish Parliament.

BUT is the Convention itself tending to a settlement? I wish I could think so. I can report no change in the Ulster position. It still stands stiffly apart from that of the Southern Unionists. They indeed may very well decide to fall in with the majority on a form of what has been called the Southborough scheme, which, while leaving the determination and collection of Customs to England, would hand back the main proceeds to Ireland. Here, too, it might be quite possible to establish an accord between the majority and minority Nationalists on the one hand, and the Southern Unionists on the other. But what would its value be if Ulster stands out? We are then up against the original rock on which the Home Rule Act has split. So long as Ulsterism retains its unregenerate spirit either in Ireland or in Canada, it will always be strong enough to keep the Empire at war with itself.

DR. GARRETT ANDERSON was not, I suppose, a great doctor, or even a great administrator. But she was beyond all doubt a great pioneer. She had rough work to do. Almost alone she cut her way through a mass of selfish jealousy and prejudice that cannot to-day even be put into respectable English, to say nothing of a tolerable synthesis. A softer, more pliable character and temperament than hers could not have done it. Perhaps it was even necessary in those early days to show that women could be as pushful as men, and were not going to be shut out from a kind of intellectual service for which they were just as well equipped as men, if not better. What Mrs. Anderson did for women's entry into the professions, her sister did for their path to politics. To-day, the double warfare is accomplished. But the story of the adventure, as told in Tuesday's "Times" and "Manchester Guardian," is hardly an inspiring chapter of the great History of Man as Man has chosen to write it.

I AM reminded of an old French anticipation—most good things come from France—of the League of Nations. From whom but—Béranger? Listen to

#### LA SAINTE ALLIANCE DES PEUPLES, 1818.

J'ai vu la Paix descendre sur la Terre,  
Semant de l'or, des fleurs, et des épis.  
L'air était calme, et du dieu de la guerre  
Elle étouffait les foudres assoupis:  
'Ah,' disait elle, 'égaux par la vaillance,  
Français, Anglais, Belge, Russe, ou Germain,  
Peuples, formez une Sainte Alliance,  
Et donnez-vous la main!  
Pauvres mortels, tant de haine vous lasse;  
Vous ne goûtez qu'un pénible sommeil;  
D'un globe étroit divisez mieux l'espace;  
Chacun de vous aura place au soleil.'

What an exact picture of the world of to-day—especially in its finishing stroke! Would any of my readers like to try an English rendering of it?

I AM glad to see Miss Asquith's pleasant little play, "Off and On," appearing in the "Strand Magazine." It is always well, when one is equipped with so much wit, to give it an airing, and Miss Asquith has enough to furnish a much more substantially laid table than this. But it is a very good beginning.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### ORIGINALITY.

It has been said that the object of science is to get rid of miracles, and scientific men often boast of their success in extending the reign of law over the wilds of chance and the miraculous. But this introduction of intellectual order does not really diminish the area of the miraculous. It merely substitutes one great for many small miracles. By resolving abnormality within the normal, we enrich the latter with the wonder extracted from the former. Thus science continually increases the wonder of the whole. Nowhere is this better seen than in psychology. Foolish persons have sometimes made it a reproach that psychologists have busied themselves overmuch with the abnormal, with morbid states, dissociated personality, criminality, dream life, and other eccentricities. But why is it that the psychologist is rightly drawn to devote much of his attention to the irregular, the unintelligible, just as the practical moralist concerns himself peculiarly with the one sinner rather than with the ninety-nine just men who need no repentance? It is not merely because the abnormal is superficially the more interesting, but because it is really the key to understanding in the true sense of the ancient maxim, *exceptio probat regulam*. For it is there that you catch Nature "on the hop," out of her common beat, doing something odd, and in a revealing mood. For it is not in the last resort *Natura naturata* but *Natura naturans* we are after, Nature as a "going concern," a creative activity.

So it comes to pass that just as biology fastens ever more persistently on problems of variation and mutation, so psychology seeks light upon the ordinary processes of the mind from the extraordinary. The object, of course, is to bring the illumination of the extraordinary within the compass of the ordinary, transmuting the latter by its presence. The greater part of our operative life has become fairly intelligible, in that it consists of a tolerably regular and calculable set of activities, conducted according to rules individually and socially adopted. We form tolerably correct ideas of the ordinary working of our mind and that of our neighbors under ordinary circumstances, and generalize such ideas under the concepts of "common sense," public opinion, "the man-in-the-street," and so forth. But if we are to apprehend with clear consciousness the power or vital process thus ordered or stereotyped, we must find it in freer flow.

It is this consideration that gives importance to the psychology of the abnormal. Understanding searches for origins, perhaps the nearest we can ever get to causes. In this search a conspicuous service is rendered by Mr. Thomas Sharnol in a book entitled "Originality" (Laurie). The writer has read, experienced, and thought, widely and deeply, and sets out his opinions and judgments upon the speculative topics, which he discusses with great candor and vivacity. He does not affect to discover any ultimate truth, or to settle "the meaning of life." But by careful comparison and analysis of intellectual and moral genius, he goes further than anyone has gone before to direct our thought in a country which sentimental perversity has persisted in trying to retain as an uncharted wilderness.

His first task is to uproot the notion so widely held that genius is a rare quality or power separate from, or added to, those commonly possessed. Ordinary psychology has at last got rid of the doctrine of separate faculties, and though the distinction of Feeling, Thought, and Will retains its use and a certain validity, the characteristic modern presentation is that of a stream of conscious and subconscious energy or life in which they all participate and merge. Their distinction in any mental operation is one of stress or dominance. When we once accept this notion of a common stream of psychical energy upon which all draw, we are forced to admit that what otherwise might appear a separate, miraculous gift is a higher or special degree of this common humanity:—

"Ribot has proved conclusively that there is not one imagination for the poet and one for the merchant or inventor. If a poet forgets his umbrella he forgets it in

the same way as the ordinary person; and when the ordinary person has to imagine a scheme for getting out of a difficulty, he uses the same kind of imagination as a poet. An unpalatable truth, doubtless, but still it is the truth. Shakespeare's brain was a human brain, and so is that of the most inefficient playwright of the moment. The bard did not possess Feeling, Thought, Will, and a fourth something which we call *Genius*. His mind worked according to the mental laws that govern all minds; the difference between him and others lay in one thing: his was a mind of almost infinite compass. The average man has consciousness; Shakespeare had it to the *n*th degree, so vast was its range, so susceptible its feelings, and so profound its unity of conception."

Extensive and intensive sensitiveness to all experience, storage of impressions in the accessible antechamber of consciousness, and an unusual degree of unifying power are the chief *semeia* of high talent or genius. There is not one genius for poetry or painting, another for scientific discovery, a third for business success. So far as the *modus operandi* of genius is discoverable, it is the same in the "happy thought" of a great poet and the happy *coup* of a great financier. Inspiration consists of the arrival in consciousness of "particularly good ideas," and, so far as there are "laws of inspiration," they are much the same in all births of such ideas whatever the milieu. What seems to give support to the miraculous conception—*viz.*, the sudden emergence of the thought from the unknown, the intuitive quality—belongs to all the cases. We recognize at once the operation of the poet's mind in what De Quincey claimed for himself, "an electric aptitude for seizing affinities." But is it not equally discernible in the action of a business-man to whom a new important "proposition" is submitted? The business-man of genius does not work out all the pros and cons on paper, laboriously reaching his conclusion. He lets the matter sink into his mind and simmer there, and the resulting decision emerges of its own accord. This, of course, is the common mode of what we call intuitive judgment. Newman illustrates the process from literary criticism as "the computation of probabilities, independent of each other, arising out of the nature and circumstances of the particular case which is under review; probabilities too fine to avail separately, too subtle and circuitous, to be converted into syllogisms." Psychologists used to call this the "Illative Sense"—"that by which the mind draws remote inferences without a conscious syllogistic process." The stress here is on the word conscious. For it is clear that what we call the formal laws of logic rule in the subconscious, as in the conscious process: the process of reasoning, so far as it is involved in reaching the result, goes on there, but with far greater rapidity and drawing upon a far wider range of evidence.

The connection between the conscious and the unconscious process thus becomes of paramount interest, and to this Mr. Sharnol devotes much space. Everyone must possess a great store of experience; the question is one of availability. How elusive is our grasp of much of our direct personal experience, how much more of the memory of what we have read or got second-hand, everybody recognizes. It may seem paradoxical to say that memory is a chief factor in all great originality. And yet this is undoubtedly the case. A great discovery implies an unusually wide and accurate grasp of previous knowledge. This applies not only to intellectual speculation, but to judgment where emotion enters.

"Memory acting for the most part unconsciously, but with unusual efficiency, is the basis of our intuitions. Instinctive likes and dislikes, immediate decisions when confronted with a new situation in business, are the spontaneous outcome of previous experience acting in a focus."

But the sub-conscious utilization of memory in an act of intuition, and the emergence of this result above the threshold of consciousness, remain the centres of interest. Here is the actual birth and delivery of a new thought or other human expression. How does it happen or arrive? Mr. Sharnol does not hold that science is or will be able to give an answer satisfactory to the intellect. He stands with Bergson on the



impossibility of presenting creation in terms of intellectual analysis. Instead of attempting it, he devotes himself to the more profitable task of considering the conditions which are found by experience to favor or damage originality in a person or a society. For the miracle of genius, as we know, is not one of individuality alone. The Age of Pericles, the Renaissance in mid-Europe, "the spacious days of Great Elizabeth" in our own history, present the problem *in extenso*. When inspiration is treated as a purely natural process, we perceive at once that it must have its "laws," physical and social, as well as personal, and that environment must come in as protection, food, and stimulus. Periodicity appertains to evolution in all higher life processes, so that we should naturally expect breaks in the flow of original creative energy, both for the individual and for humanity. Waiting is an all-important part of the *regimen* of genius. That is why artists, poets, and other traders upon happy moments are classed as idlers and vagabonds by the practical man.

"Think you, 'mid this mighty sum,  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
And we must still be seeking."

This wisdom and economy of recipient waiting is instructive in the artistic temper, though it has its own dangerous excesses. Nor does it necessarily involve idleness. The change of occupation will as often do as well or better. Hayden said "When my work does not advance, I retire into the oratory with my rosary and say an Ave; immediately ideas come to me." Poincaré's comment on his own mental experience emphasises the relation of the conscious mind to the Antechamber of Consciousness.

"When I am engaged in trying to think anything out, the process of doing so appears to be this: the ideas that lie at any moment within my full consciousness seem to attract of their own accord the most appropriate out of a number of other ideas that are lying close at hand, but imperfectly within the range of my consciousness."

The strain of conscious effort appears often to inhibit the desired attraction made freely beneath the threshold. Free association, not the force of conscious will, is the secret of success.

This is not a plea for ease. On the contrary, any great creative thought implies a great volume of energy, both for the rich storage of experience which feeds it, and for the work of development and execution which converts it into an established truth. The case of Darwin and of Wallace in their discovery of the process of natural selection in the evolution of species is a classical example. There will be a rhythmic law of change of work and waiting, as there is for nature's productivity in agriculture and every other kind. It applies to a collective as to individual man. Some ages must lie fallow that a later age may richly yield. Any appearance of fabulism or hard determinism which may attach to such a scientific treatment is removed by Mr. Sharnol's larger doctrine of human liberty and self-direction through the process of education and good arrangements. He entertains no doubt about the vast waste of originality caused by the burdens of traditionalism, professionalism, and mis-education. It all comes to a lack of free and competent individualism, the failure to make a material and a moral world which provides properly for the contribution to the new stock which everyone in some measure is capable of making by virtue of his uniqueness. But after all it is not the addition of innumerable tiny increments from common men and women that chiefly count. One great fault is the contentment with low standards of merit and the failure to furnish methods of discovering, evoking, nourishing and stimulating the rarer forms of originality. Sectional dogmatism has always been the bane of progress.

"Life is a whole, and in spite of the obvious difference that a system of values is bound to make in our appreciation of mind and matter, it cannot be denied that all our wars and persecutions have been due to

sectional idolatry—i.e., we deduce a scheme of salvation and punish those who will not accept it; we announce a theory of government, and imprison the people who refuse it; or we set up an economic god and start a revolution."

The miracle, in the sense of a sudden, dramatic revelation of new powers, does not fade away with any such extension of the reign of law. The part played by "mutations" in the evolutionary doctrine conserves all that is valuable and humanly stimulating in the older attitude. Genius will always display itself by sudden leaps from unsuspected quarters and in novel shapes. For human research can never "catch up" with the full conditions which render prophecy possible. What intelligent arrangements can do is to promote conditions which experience has shown to be favorable to these seeds of great achievement. Is it possible that when the early havoc of this war has been repaired, and some tolerable order has been restored, the destruction of our stodgy, sterile, over-ordered, and too timid pre-war life, may bring some compensation in audacity of thought and discovery in art, literature, and science, as well as in the collective workmanship of politics and industry?

#### THE NEW MAGNIFICAT.

WAR has its revenges no less grotesque than time's. War has put down the mighty from their seat, for in what Siberian cold, the prison of his multitudinous victims, does the Emperor of All the Russias now languish, himself his victims' prisoner? Where now is that Constantine who was called the Bulgar-slayer, the Napoleon of the Near East? Where is Peter, who boldly filled the bloodstained throne? Or Nicholas, the Black Mountain's patriarchal and calculating King? Or the Roumanian who defied his Hohenzollern blood? Or Albert, the Well-Beloved of his violated land? Never before has the world beheld such an overturn of royal fortunes, or harbored in her holes and corners so many wandering kings in exile.

And, in converse manner, war has exalted the humble and meek. Viscount Northcliffe, once the Mr. Harmsworth whom we knew, now one day flouts the British Empire's Government and the next is mentioned as possibly their Ambassador in the greatest of the Embassies. Mr. Lloyd George, so lately sneered at by the rich and great as a little Welsh attorney, can boast that he alone of European Ministers has survived three and a-half years of war, and from the topmost height of adulated power looks down in his turn on colleagues whose policy he shared and now abjures. Sir Edward Carson and Sir F. E. Smith, who, only four years ago, were denounced as rebels conspiring to overthrow law by violence and arms—one of them now, as leader of the Law, prosecutes rebels himself; the other dominates the country, directing a War Aims Committee, whose object is, not the statement of war aims, but the suppression of statement. Thus it is that war, putting down the mighty, and exalting the humble, works together with the universal flux in which all is fluid and nought abides.

And, as a parallel with Lord Northcliffe and the rest, illustrating the exaltation of the humble and meek, take the case of the Russian, Mr. Tchicherin. It is true he is well born and well educated. In his brave letter to the "Times" of December 13th, Dr. Hagberg Wright, of the London Library, tells us he is a nephew of the great Russian jurist, Mr. Boris Tchicherin, Mayor of Moscow, who was dismissed for daring to tell Alexander III. that the first duty of a ruler was to inaugurate reforms. Rebellion is, perhaps, in his blood; but, anyhow, the British Government clapped him into gaol—into Brixton gaol, we believe—and kept him there without trial, just as though he were a Miss Howsin or any other British subject deprived of the right to the Habeas Corpus writ. Dr. Hagberg Wright says he is "a Socialist and a Pacifist," so that he belongs to the class of men most despised and rejected by Cabinet Ministers, the middle-aged, and the "patriotic" Press. We believe him also to be one of those unambitious and

devoted people who, confined in a prison cell, account themselves lords of infinite space, so long as their imprisonment helps to advance their cause outside their body's confines. None the less, the Russian Government, exalting the humble and meek, has appointed the prisoner in his cell to be their Ambassador to the Court of England herself, and for Mr. Tchicherin, as for Viscount Northcliffe, Mr. George, the Kings, and the others, Fortune has turned her wheel.

It is not often now that anyone can rekindle the gaiety of nations, which war has so hideously eclipsed. But in Mr. Tchicherin's situation we catch a gleam of gaiety. Peering through the "Judas" spyhole in a cell-door, the warder perceives his prisoner seated on the plank bed wrapt in contemplation of the Social Democratic future of mankind. He turns the lock and says, "Will your Excellency step this way?" With one regretful look round that scene of peace and freedom, Mr. Tchicherin passes out. The Governor of the Gaol signs the order of release, and bows as to an emissary of the Crown or a Prison Inspector. The warder helps him pack the little bag containing all man wants below. He waves a sad farewell to companions in misfortune tramping in single file round the flagstone maze, like horses training for the "cavalry ride" in a Military Tournament. He says a sympathetic good-bye to the warder jangling the iron keys. He shakes hands with his comrade the porter, who opes the iron door. After two years, he stands once more exposed in the unprotected world.

Shouldering his bag with a stick, he trots along the lane—that Via Dolorosa—which leads from the prison to the top of Brixton Hill. He waits beside the public-house and the lamp-post labelled "All trams stop here." He climbs the tram fed on the County Council's lightning, and is whirled to Westminster Bridge. In some perplexity, he asks his way to Chesham Place. A motor 'bus conveys him past Westminster Abbey and the National Liberal Club to Victoria. For a moment, he hesitates whether he ought not to call at once at Buckingham Palace, and, at all events, leave a card; but he decides to go home first and wash. Tired of humping his bag, he asks a coster with an empty donkey-cart if he will take him to Belgrave Square for sixpence. The coster bargains for a bob, owing to the rise in prices, and gets it with fraternal greetings. They inquire for Chesham House, and draw up at the door. The portal opens, and a liveried footman tells them no vegetables are wanted to-day as His Excellency is out of Town, and they ought to have gone to the back door. Mr. Tchicherin dismounts, and recognizing a fellow-countryman in the footman, falls upon his neck. With a brief commentary on foreigners, the coster spits upon the shilling, and urges the donkey's moderate career.

What will the new Ambassador do with the mansion now his home? How, like the Stoic Emperor, will he contrive to practice virtue even in a palace? To one who could hold infinity in a cell, what profit lies in all those rooms—those marble halls, those suites of apartments, reception-rooms, dining-rooms, bed-rooms, bath-rooms, kitchens, sculleries, coach-houses, stables, out-houses, and the rest? Will he take lodgers from the East End, or, like his Government in Petrograd, throw the house open to any families in need of shelter from the cold? If he keeps servants, how will he maintain the social equality of a Socialist? Or will he sweep the hall, and dust, and wash up, and when Royalty visits him open the door himself and run down the steps to say, "How do you do?"—steps which he has himself scrubbed white? Will he refuse to be paid above the flat-rate of £3 a week, or is there among Ambassadors a trade union to which he must not play the blackleg? These are difficult and important questions, presenting themselves, one may hope, to every State official now, and with pleasurable interest we await Mr. Tchicherin's solution.

To some minds the Russian Government's selection of a political prisoner shut in a London gaol to fill their London Embassy may seem only another instance of doctrinaire simplicity—the kind of open-hearted *naïveté* with which the Russian delegates to arrange an armistice appealed to the mighty and helmeted German generals

just as though they were human beings like themselves, and all men equal. "You dear people," one can imagine them saying, "we are sure you'll give us back those islands off Riga, because they really belong to us, you know. And you won't move any troops to other fronts, now, will you? It wouldn't be at all fair. Besides, if you do, we shall be obliged to scatter revolutionary pamphlets among your nice soldiers. And where will you be then?" To one who has known the German general in all his glory, there is something appalling in the picture, but something also illuminated by hope. If only everyone would thus regard Emperors, Kings, Generals, Ministers, and all other official persons just as fellow-creatures passing through life from darkness into darkness amid the common sorrows and pleasures of the world; and if only people put that simple trust in the power of Reason—the power of the Word—what a lot of hypocophancy, humiliation, fear, and anguish we should all be saved!

Towards that blessed consummation this Russian appointment may be leading, and behind it may lurk a greater significance than childlike simplicity. During the abortive Russian revolution of twelve years ago, Tolstoy said to the present writer, "We are witnessing the end of an age." At the time, he meant the age of Empires—the age of domination by one race over another—and he was specially thinking of Finland, Poland, Ireland, and India. But the idea of the departing age may be widened now. Perhaps history will say that in this century we were witnessing the end of the European age—an age like the Roman Empire's, marked by noble literature, and marvellous discoveries, and great personalities, and unequally distributed wealth, and overwhelming wars. And history may come to date another age from the day when an Ambassador, fresh from prison, arrived at his Embassy in a coster's cart—an age as yet unnamed, but having for its motto the words of a King:—

"Take physic, pomp;  
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel;  
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,  
And show the heavens more just."

In describing that outworn European age, history will very likely marvel that, though the finest precepts were intimately known and frequently repeated, the age continued to give that which was holy to the dogs by giving the lives of the young to fight the battles of the old; and it will marvel that many people of the age rather objected to human equality in comfort, food, and opportunities; and that the peacemakers, who were to be called the children of God, were generally called something quite different, even by the bishops.

## Letters to the Editor.

### MR. WILSON'S CONCEPTION OF PEACE.

SIR,—Since the United States declared war on Germany, President Wilson has been looking at a vision—the vision of a world made safe for democracy by a democracy, and one begins to wonder whether he has seen anything else. He did not see that by vetoing the Stockholm Conference he was on one hand aiding and abetting the reactionaries in England and France, and on the other hand opening the door into Russia for German intrigue. Confronted with the present chaos in Russia, Mr. Wilson tells us that, "the Russian people have been poisoned by the very falsehoods that have kept the German people in the dark, and the poison has been administered by the very same hands. The only possible antidote is the truth. It cannot be uttered too plainly or too often, from every point of view."

It is conceivable that a good deal of truth would have been uttered at the Stockholm Conference. But turning it down as a German peace-trap, Mr. Wilson sent instead a message to Russia. "The war," he said, "has begun to go against Germany, and in their desperate desire to escape inevitable and ultimate defeat, those who are in authority in Germany are using every possible instrumentality, and are making use even of the influence of groups of parties among their own subjects, to promote a propaganda on both sides of the sea which will preserve for them their influence at home and their power abroad at the undoing of the very men they are using." . . . "We are fighting again for the liberty, the self-government, the undictated development of



all peoples, and every feature of the settlement that concludes this war must be conceived and executed for that purpose. Remedies must be found as well as statements of principle that will have a pleasing and sonorous sound. Practical questions can be settled only by practical means. Phrases will not accomplish the result. . . . For these things we can afford to pour out blood and treasure; for these are things we have always professed to desire, and unless we pour out the blood and treasure now and succeed, we may never be able to unite or show conquering force in the great cause of human liberty."

This to Russia—already face to face with famine and the realization that only an early and general peace could save the Revolution. It takes time to pour out blood and treasure.

On November 13th, Mr. Wilson addressed the annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, Mr. Gompers introducing him as "the Man of Destiny." The speech is interesting because it raises a tantalizing question. "Germany," said Mr. Wilson, "is thrusting upon us again and again discussions of peace talk. About what? She talks about Belgium, Northern France, Alsace-Lorraine: these are deeply interesting subjects, but not the heart of the matter. Look at the map of Europe. Germany has absolute control over Austria, Hungary, practical control over the Balkans, Turkey and Asia Minor." Mr. Wilson then told his audience that he had been looking at a map of Europe the other day. Whether the map was his own map or Mr. Balfour's, he did not inform the Convention. Perhaps he did not know.

In his address to Congress, Mr. Wilson espouses more deliberately than ever before "the conquest of peace by arms," as against peace by negotiation, at the same time reiterating what he has been saying since his declaration of war. America has entered the war in the cause of freedom the world over, has no quarrel with the German people, intends "no interference with their internal affairs." Her quarrel is with their rulers. America is fighting the German people not to defeat them, but to democratize them. The last raises another interesting question. Is a dead German to be considered democratized? Then comes a dire threat. "If they should still, after the war is over, continue to be obliged to live under ambitious and intriguing masters, it might be impossible to admit them to a partnership of nations. . . . It might be impossible also, in such untoward circumstances, to admit Germany to free economic intercourse. But there would be no aggression in this, and such a situation would, in the very nature of things cure itself by processes which would assuredly set in." Possibly, some of the "critics," whom Mr. Wilson "would like to see exported," have been asking whether "the undictated development of nations" might not be left safely to these same processes, than to machine-guns. But of Pacifists Mr. Wilson has said, "I am opposed, not to the feeling of Pacifists, but to their stupidity. Pacifists do not know how to get peace, but I do."

Has not Mr. Wilson lost sight of the fact that a genuine impulse toward democracy must come from within? There are many signs that it is coming in Germany, and given peace there would be many ways of strengthening this impulse. To-day, there is only one way of direct communication with the German people, until, as Mr. Wilson somewhat quaintly observes, "the last gun is fired."

In the fourth year of war that has already exacted an unimaginable toll of human life and suffering, one statesman has had the courage to say that peace cannot come too soon, and another statesman, that it may come too late. Meanwhile, Mr. Wilson is saying, "the cause being just and holy, the settlement must be of like motive and quality. . . . For this cause we will battle until the last gun is fired. The hand of God is laid upon the nations. He will show them favor, I devoutly believe, only if they rise to the clear heights of His own justice and mercy." From which it would seem that Mr. Wilson has left the question of peace to God.

AN AMERICAN.

December 10th, 1917.

#### THE POLITICAL CONSCIENCE.

SIR,—Will you grant me a word of reply to my two critics? Mr. Graham-Barton regards the "Inner Light" vouchsafed to religionists as of sacred and irrefragable authority.

"'Tis a dark lantern of the Spirit,  
Which none can see but those who bear it,  
A light that falls down from on high,  
For spiritual trades to cozen by."

His Conscientious Objector acts on principles which no one can confute because no one can comprehend. I do not yet see why the State should show special reverence for those who are guided solely by an individual self-regarding voice, while it despises those who act on social and reasonable grounds for a certain policy of the State. Mr. Edward Jenks, whose delightful book on "The History of Politics" introduced me into the realm of Political Philosophy, raises a more fundamental issue. I did not enter into the high region of political theory, but on the plain ground of practical wisdom disputed the good of disfranchising political objectors. It is not wise policy, I urged,

to deprive the State for seven years of the votes of men like Stephen Hobhouse and Clifford Allen, Scott Duckers, and Fenner Brockway. Every sensible man knows this, and so does Mr. Jenks, if he were not led away by an elusive theory of the State. On his principles a minority must always be coerced by a majority, who represent the absolute law of things. His majority is like the Calvinist Deity. What it wills is, *ipso facto*, right. Whatever it wills not is bound to be wrong. This forensic and immoral view of the State has had a great vogue in England, to say nothing of Prussia. But it is a false and unworkable theory, and its days are numbered. On Mr. Jenks's principles, Socrates and Moses, Wat Tyler and Sir Thomas More, Charles James Fox and John Bright, were misguided anarchists. But the State is not a brute power, with no organs of reason and justice, but an association of free citizens for the good of the whole. The freedom of the individual groups within the State is the very life of the true State. The unity of compulsion and force alone leads to the death of the State, which only lives in the free minds and the loving obedience of its citizens. Hobbes and Hegel will have to give way to Gierke, Maitland, and Hobhouse in Political Philosophy. All that is of value in the State has been won by the effort and patriotism of brave minorities, whom the majorities have often tried to crush. The true State is not built on the will to power. The City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is Good, lives by admiration, hope, and love. The real anarchists, the original anarchists in Russia and elsewhere, are the usurpers of power, for power's sake. Mr. Jenks assumes that a majority favor the policy of our rulers, and that they are free to choose other rulers if they will. Both are vain, unproved assumptions. Most soldiers whom one meets hate our present political policy. But even if a majority, blinded by a mercenary and ignorant Press, wish to go on the path of mutual suicide, the minority will be false to the State if they are meekly quiescent. Mr. Jenks claims the right of the State to exclude them from citizenship. If Right spells Power, I do not dispute. But Wisdom, Justice, and Love, by which the nations live, tell another tale.—Yours, &c.,

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#### THE FREE CHURCHES AND WAR AIMS.

SIR,—For over three years the Labor Party and the Free Churches have given their rulers a blank cheque on political policy.

Time will prove that military ineffectiveness has been due largely to unwise policy. We have been content to fight blindly without asking questions.

If we leave war aims to be decided by men of the Clemenceau and Lloyd George type we shall meet with a few more military disasters. Even on the low ground of military success, it behoves the people to look after their leaders. I am glad that the Labor Party has become increasingly alive to the need of a definite and just policy. Mr. Henderson may be trusted to see the thing through in that quarter.

Where are the Free Churches? Are they content to be dragged blindly along? So long as Sir Edward Carson is in the War Cabinet and makes his speeches about annexing German territory and advocates an aggressive Pan-Britishism as noxious as the German brand, who can say that our aims are unselfish? No Englishman can affirm it, and no German be expected to believe it. Yet the Free Churches, so long as they are silent, are represented by the Carson brand of patriotism. I am sure the rank and file are as sound as ever in their hatred of aggression. Let Mr. Meyer rally the hosts and demand a new statement of war aims.

What Government dare resist a United Labor Party and the Free Churches?—Yours, &c.,

A MEMBER OF THE RANK AND FILE.

#### "THE NEW JERUSALEM."

SIR,—The degradation of the best is the worst form of degradation, and it is on this account that I deplore the fact that you have opened your columns to the article in your last issue, headed "The New Jerusalem: 1920."

In the past, the regular readers of your periodical have found intellectual refreshment, generous sympathy with all classes of society, and spiritual insight into social problems. Sometimes we had occasion to appreciate your examples of genuine humor and high-toned illustrations of the art of satire; but, to-day, I must protest at the want of real humor in subjecting the conception of a New Jerusalem to coarse gibes and cruel contempt. I am not a Zionist, and my New Jerusalem is built on foundations not made with hands. My nation is the English nation, and through humbly serving England I would serve the cause of humanity. But, because I love my faith, I protest with intense feeling against your travesty of all we hold most sacred.

I admit that there are unscrupulous profiteers among our race as well as among other races, and also that there are some men and women who hold their religion as a thing of nought,



and worship Mammon in the place of the God of Love and Truth and Righteousness. I emphatically deny that these people should be regarded as the votaries of Judaism. Watt's immortal figure of Mammon represents not one, but every human race which becomes debased. Christianity should never be fairly exemplified by reference to the acts of drunkards, or prostitutes, or even by the journalism of the writer of the article under consideration. The Founder of Christianity came not to destroy, but to build up on the foundations of Judaism. These foundations remain intact, in spite of the attacks of intolerance and prejudice and passion, carried on throughout the ages, even to this day. Are you aware, sir, that our religion is based on the belief in one universal God, with whom every individual soul can have communion, so that every human aspiration can be sanctified, and every human will be disciplined by the divine ideal? I hope that, when again you have occasion to describe Jewish conceptions, you will endeavor to reconcile your description with fact, so that it does not repel a considerable section of your readers. For I am convinced that only those non-Jews will be amused by your article, who, like a few members of my own race, have had their tastes vitiated by contact with that which is contemptible in English life and English literature. The vast majority will object to the travesty of Judaism and will also find in your article jarring references to the representatives of Church organization.

All believers are surely united in deploring this kind of destructive criticism, which under cover of clever satire tends to undermine fidelity and produce barren despair.—Yours, &c.,

LILY MONTAGU.

12, Kensington Palace Gardens, W.

[The satire our correspondent criticises had a wider meaning and significance than she attaches to it. Its irony was directed not merely against Judaic but against Christian materialism.—ED., THE NATION.]

#### THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS IX.

SIR,—In the course of a fairly long life I have read many desperate attempts at "a get-out," but a more pathetic failure than the reviewer of "Newman's Letters," I cannot recall.

He might review Jowett's Life and dismiss it with a snigger as "odious" because the Master inspired a new race of prigs at Balliol; or Lincoln's as "odious" because of the existing negro question in the United States; or Keble's as "odious" because Tractarianism pointed the way to the Church of Rome. But we look for "higher criticism" in THE NATION. Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS WELLESLEY.

SIR,—May I be permitted to carry one step further the protest made by Mr. J. S. Fletcher, and endorsed by your many Catholic readers?

"Odious," says your Reviewer, "is, no doubt, a relative term"; true, but it is a term that should have some relation to facts and, moreover, to facts in their proper proportion. Your Reviewer quotes one incident from "Newman's Letters" that might give occasion for the use of the term; but will he claim that the rest of the "Life" will bear out that judgment? I am quite sure he will not. Nevertheless, he gaily labels the whole Pontificate "odious," so as to lead ever you, sir, to think he meant its "intellectual character," which now he assures us he certainly did not mean.

Thus is anti-Catholic history written, and so it is read.—Yours, &c.,

S. J. GOBLING.

Dormer Place, Leamington.

#### THE HEREFORD APPOINTMENT.

SIR,—The Hereford appointment is the best, the wisest, and the most courageous thing in the way of Church policy and administration that has been done by any Government of late years. That it should be denounced by the clerical press was to be expected; on the rare occasions when a clergyman who represents the larger lay outlook rather than the professional clerical mind is raised to the episcopate, the press—which Montalembert characterizes as *sans mesure, sans science, et sans charité*—appears in its least amiable and least respectable light. The outcry engineered against Dr. Hampden's nomination to Hereford (1847), and Dr. Temple's to Exeter (1869), are examples. At such times what Dr. Arnold called "the party of Hopkin and Phinetas" is in the ascendant. It is as untruthful as it is unscrupulous. "It is painful to think that these exaggerations, in too many cases, cannot be innocent; in Oxford there is an *εργαστήριον ψευδών* whose activity is surprising." [Stanley's "Life of Arnold," p. 353, 281]. And, to judge from the language of certain Oxford clergy, as reported in to-day's "Times"—language which would be grotesque were it not elandorous—the temper of Oxford (the diocese, not the University) is unchanged to-day.

Less interest is taken now than then in ecclesiastical politics:

those who are engaged in the congenial work of organizing the opposition to Dr. Henson's appointment will stir up no more than a small storm in a small teacup. But, in an article of disconcerting candor, the "Church Times" gives away their secret; and proclaims the results that may be expected should the mischievous agitation of what is known as Church Reform, and as the "Life and Liberty Movement," realize in this country Cavour's fallacy of a Free Church in a Free State. "There is no more sincere defender of establishment than Dr. Henson, who well knows that in a disestablished Church the position of himself and those who range themselves with him would instantly become precarious." ["Church Times," December 14th.] It is perfectly true; and the emphatic word "instantly" should be remembered; we know what we have to expect, should these sectaries get the upper hand. Fifty years ago one of the wisest of English bishops warned us against "liberty" of this kind.

"There are not a few among our own brethren who consider this liberty so desirable that, in their opinion, it outweighs all the advantages of the Establishment, which, without it, are, in their eyes, but gilded fetters. I entirely dissent from this opinion. I have no sympathy with the motives of those who hold it. I believe that the kind of liberty which they desire would be a grinding tyranny, and the worst calamity that could befall the Church."—(Bishop Thirlwall's Charge, 1869.)

And, if I may quote what I have had lately had occasion to say elsewhere,

"Who can doubt that, in the event of Disestablishment in this country, the ministry would be closed to men of independent mind? That terms of communion would be imposed which would alienate non-party Churchmen? And that the moral and intellectual standing of what was once the Church of England would be lowered from its level of a Church to that of a sect?"—"The Things that are Caesar's." John Murray, 1917.)

—Yours, &c.,

ALFRED FAWKES.

Ashby St. Ledgers.

#### FACTORY COMMANDERS.

SIR.—The reviewer of Mr. Sidney Webb's book says:—"the worker feels. . . that the whole 'stop-watch' system is an intolerable insult to his manhood, and to his craftsmanship." It would be interesting to have this expanded. As generally used, the stop-watch and motion study methods are applied to repetition work where the arrangements of tools, supply and removal of material are designed to minimize labor; and the whole purpose may be defeated by clumsy manipulation. The stop watch is often the only way of deciding between different methods or sequences, and it is not quite easy to see how the manhood or craftsmanship of the worker is affronted by its application. Even in such cases as the assembly or erection of complex machines or instruments, there are often alternative methods and sequences, and without some such tests it is not easy to decide between them. In the higher classes of work, demanding individual skill and conscientious application, where true craftsmanship is best developed, there is evidently not much room for such tests; and an alteration in methods of working formed by the habits of many years is difficult to effect. Even in such cases, however, it is difficult to see what harm is done the workers by studying their individual ways of working, and ascertaining which give the best results, and why.

The best workmen are tenacious of their own methods, but they are not beyond the stimulus of emulation, and it is not apparent why they should resent the methods of gauging their personal efficiency.—Yours &c.,

HENRY M. SAYERS.

Streatham, S.W.

#### Poetry.

##### "NOCTURNE."

I LIFT her from her little bed,  
She wriggles, smiles, blinks in the candlelight,  
And lays her head  
Upon my breast, and puts her arm, the right,  
Around my stronger arm; lets her left hand,  
Small, uncontrolled through sleep,  
Rest on my bare neck; thus in waking land  
My lamb will nestle to her father's keep.

Turning her head, she catches sight  
Of Mother, and at once she smiles again;  
On sheets clean white,  
Over her lap, her mother with restrain  
Places her, makes sweet her clothing; she swings  
Her head and eyes to find  
Her father, make sure he is there, then clings  
To mother's breast, and slips into sleep-land kind.

AUSTIN PRIESTMAN.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Tristan and Iseult." A play in four acts. By Arthur Symonds. (Heinemann. 5s. net.)
- "The Question." A Brief History and Examination of Modern Spiritualism. By Edward Clodd. (Grant Richards. 10s. 6d. net.)
- "Madame Roland." A Biography. By Mrs. Pope-Hennessy. (Nisbet. 16s. net.)
- "English Folk Songs from Southern Appalachians." Collected by Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil J. Sharp. (Putnam. 12s. 6d. net.)
- "Stepsons of France." Stories of the Foreign Legion. By Captain P. C. Wren. (Murray. 5s. net.)
- "Histoire de la littérature française." Tome IV: Le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Par Ferdinand Brunetière. (Delgrave: Paris. 11fr.)

A TOWN which has been long in the zone of fire, and then is left by the enemy, gives a wayfarer who happens into it the feeling that this is the day after the last day, and that he has been overlooked. Somehow he did not hear Gabriel's trumpet; everybody else has gone on. There is not a sound but the subdued crackling of flames somewhere deep in the overthrown and abandoned. There is no movement but that of wreaths of smoke drifting across empty streets. The unexpected collapse of a cornice or a wall is frightful. So is the silence which follows. A starved kitten, which materializes out of nothing and is there complete and instantaneous at his feet—ginger stripes, and a mew which is weak but is a veritable voice of the living—is first a great surprise, and then a ridiculous comfort. It follows him about. When he misses it he goes back to look for it—to find the miserable object racing frantically to meet him. Lonely? The Poles are not more desolate. There is no place as forlorn as that where man once was busy and established, where the patient work of his hands is all round, but where silence has fallen like a secret so dense that you feel that if it were not also so desperately invisible you could grasp a corner of it and lift it, to learn a little of the doom of those who have gone. What happened to them?

Nobody is there to tell you. House fronts have fallen in rubble across the road. There is a smell of opened cellars. All the houses are blind. Few have upper floors, and there are mounds of damp mortar and brickwork below. Sometimes pictures are askew on the walls, with the glass broken. You stand gazing at them for long if they happen to be family portraits, trying to divine something you cannot name. In the gardens, overturned by occasional shells or by the stuff cast out of a crafty dug-out, a few ragged flowers continue, or there is a summer-house lumbered with incongruous litter. It is curious how little is to be found of the common things of the household—perhaps a broken doll, a child's boot, or a trampled bonnet. Once in such a place I found a corn-chandler's ledger. It was lying open in the muck of the roadway. The abandoned and silent ruins about me enclosed once, when flourishing, a warm, comfortable community like placid Casterbridge. Men stood there on sunny market days, and sorted wheat in the hollows of their hands—you suddenly realize, thinking of that, with all the wide and hideous disaster of the Somme around, that an elderly farmer looking for the best seed-corn in a market place, while his daughter the dairymaid is flirting with his neighbor's son, are more to us than all the Great Ones gravely and expertly tending their culture of discords.

I HAVE not often read a book with more interest than that corn-chandler's ledger. It named customers at Thiepval, Martinpuich, Courcellette, Combles, Longueval, Contalmaison, Pozières, Ginchy, and Montauban. It was hard to understand it, with the memory one had of those places. They did not exist, except as loathsome stuff in a land that was tumbled into waves of brown clay. My knowledge of that country, got with some fatigue, worry, fright, and on certain days contempt of the worst that could happen because it seemed that nothing mattered any more, touched finally with my nearest approach to exultation when

Bapaume was won and it looked certain that the defeat of the brute mind everywhere was coming soon or late—my idea of that country was such that the contrast of those ledger accounts was uncanny and unbelievable. Yet amid all the misery of the Somme, with its numbing reminder of finality and futility at every step whichever way you turned, that ledger in the mud, with none to read it, was the gospel promising that life should rise again; the suggestion of a forgotten but surviving virtue which would return, and cover the horror we knew, till the ploughman of a future time would stop at rare relics, holding them up to the sun, and dimly recall old tales.

HERE is a further suggestion of a Somme valley that is to be. It is also in the nature of a ledger, accounting debts for services rendered. Last winter, when I was behind the firing line, I met on odd days John Masefield, who was an officer, and had some special duty there. I used to wonder what he thought of it, and was puzzled as to what he could make of it, though he gave no expression as to the way it moved him excepting on an occasion when he remarked that, "compared with this, the affair of Sodom and Gomorrah was like May-day in an English village." After his book on Gallipoli there seemed a mere chance that if Masefield told the people at home about the Somme then they might picture something nearer the real thing than that hilarious circus we have of tanks running over frightened Huns. But it was not very likely he would try to do it. Gallipoli had daylight, shape, and dimensions—a beginning, a climax, and an end. The Somme, too, has its spirit, reasons, and proportions, no doubt; so had the darkness on the face of the waters. But one would need the nature of a god to compel daylight in that darkness, and to create in it definable and related shapes, and show them moving at the bidding of Fate to their destiny.

WHILE we wait for that miracle, which may never happen, Masefield has given us a book (just published by Heinemann) for which we should be grateful. It is on a phase of the battle now almost lost in the past. Time and the traffic of war have partly obliterated it; it is overgrown by weeds; and those who knew most about it are dead. Yet it is a phase which in the future will be of so acute an interest to thousands who will visit the battlefield that Masefield's book is a war-book certain to live—if for no other reason than that we are not likely to get another of its kind; because should another writer wish to do it the chance is already past. Masefield did the work at the only time when it was possible to do it. He gives us no chromatic patches in his book. It is simply a geography book. It is the first guide-book to the battleground. It is literally pedestrian, being a walk along "The Old Front Line" of the Somme.

It is surprising how quickly the possibility passes of reading in the ruins the plain story of what happened there. In some places, as near Thiepval Wood, our men made breast-works of bags of flint. The bags have rotted, but the meandering lines of flints will last as long as Stonehenge. The wood, of course, is a place to forget. What happened when our men "got over the top" could be too easily read last spring. All seemed dead there; trees, earth, stones, and bones. Yet the future was already come. The green cone of a wild hyacinth we found surprised us as much as though one of the dead had got up. Even Thiepval and the Schwaben Redoubt will recover, and leave but faint scars. Deep trenches weather level again, even when not deliberately filled. The plough will return, seed-time and harvest; and on the broad chalk downs of the Somme the wayfarer, on a tranquil day to come, may be alone with thought, and watch the chimney smoke arise from new homes in the valleys. It will not be easy to understand then that once those hills looked as though the earth had been struck by a comet, and that the men who still lived on in that place dared hope for nothing more than a death clean and quick; and sometimes cared little how quick it came, so they could be finished with their luck. John Masefield, before it was too late, has set down the original skylines and marks of the Somme much as they would have been noted by the contemplative and quiet eyes of the boys who peered at them over parapets long since, while wondering what the future held for them beyond those hills.

H. M. T.

## Reviews.

## MR. HARDY IN WINTER.

"Moments of Vision." By THOMAS HARDY. (Macmillan. 6s. net.)

IN the last poem in his new book, Mr. Hardy meditates on his own immortality, as all men of genius probably do at one time or another. "Afterwards," the poem in which he does so, is interesting, not only for this reason, but because it contains implicitly a definition and a defence of the author's achievement in literature. The poem is too long to quote in full, but the first three verses will be sufficient to illustrate what we have said:

"When the Present has latched its postern behind my tremulous stay,

And the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings,  
Delicate-filmed as new-spun silk, will the people say:  
'He was a man who used to notice such things'?"

If it be in the dusk when, like an eyelid's soundless blink,  
The dewfall-hawk comes crossing the shades to alight  
Upon the wind-warped upland thorn, will a gazer think:  
'To him this must have been a familiar sight'?"

If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and warm,  
When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,  
Will they say: 'He strove that such innocent creatures should  
come to no harm,

But he could do little for them; and now he is gone'?"

Even without the two other verses, we have here a remarkable attempt on the part of an artist to paint a portrait, as it were, of his own genius. Mr. Hardy's genius is essentially that of a man who "used to notice such things" as the fluttering of the green leaves in May, and to whom the swift passage of a night-jar in the twilight has "been a familiar sight." He is one of the most sensitive observers of nature who have written English prose. It may even be that he will be remembered longer for his studies of nature than for his studies of human nature. His days are among his greatest characters, as in the wonderful scene on the heath in the opening of "The Return of the Native." He would have written well of the world, one can imagine, even if he had found it uninhabited. But his sensitiveness is not merely sensitiveness of the eye: it is also sensitiveness of the heart. He has, indeed, that hypersensitive sort of temperament, as the verse we have quoted about the hedgehog suggests, which is the victim at once of pity and of a feeling of hopeless helplessness. Never anywhere else has there been such a world of pity put into a quotation as Mr. Hardy has put into that line and a half from "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," which he placed on the title-page of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles":

"Poor wounded name, my bosom as a bed  
Would lodge thee!"

In the use to which he put these words Mr. Hardy may be said to have added to the poetry of Shakespeare. He gave them a new imaginative context, and poured his own heart into them. For the same helpless pity which he feels for dumb creatures he feels for men and women:

"... He strove that such innocent creatures should come to no harm,

But he could do little for them."

It is the spirit of pity brooding over the landscape in Mr. Hardy's books that makes them an original and beautiful contribution to literature, in spite of his endless errors as an artist.

His new book is a reiteration both of his genius and of his errors. As we read the hundred and sixty or so poems it contains we get the impression of genius presiding over a multitude of errors. There are not half-a-dozen poems in the book the discovery of which, should the author's name be forgotten, would send the critics in quest of other work from the same magician's hand. We feel safe in prophesying immortality for only two, "The Oxen" and "In Time of 'the Breaking of Nations'"; and these have already appeared in the selection of the author's poems published in the Golden Treasury Series. The fact that the entirely new poems contain nothing on the plane of immortality, however, does not mean that "Moments of Vision" is a book of verse about which one has the right to be indifferent to the point of leaving it unread. No writer who is so concerned as Mr.

Hardy with setting down what his eyes and heart have told him can be regarded with indifference. Mr. Hardy's art is lame, but it carries the burden of genius. He may be a stammerer as a poet, but he stammers in words of his own concerning a vision of his own. When he notes the bird flying past in the dusk, "like an eyelid's soundless blink," he does not achieve music, but he chronicles an experience, not merely echoes one, with such exact truth as to make it immortally a part of all experience. There is nothing borrowed or secondhand, again, in Mr. Hardy's grim vision of the yew-trees in the churchyard by moonlight in "Jubilate":

"The yew-tree arms, glued hard to the stiff, stark air,  
Hung still in the village sky as theatre-scenes."

Mr. Hardy may not enable us to hear the music which is more than the music of the earth, but he enables us to see what he saw. He communicates his spectacle of the world. He builds his house lopsided, harsh, and with the windows in unusual places; but it is his own house, the house of a seer, of a personality. That is what we are aware of in such a poem as "On Sturminster Foot Bridge," in which perfect and precise observation of nature is allied to intolerably prosaic utterance. The first verse of this poem runs:

"Reticulations creep upon the slack stream's face  
When the wind skims irritably past,  
The current clucks smartly into each hollow place  
That years of flood have scabbled in the pier's sodden base;  
The floating-lily leaves rot fast."

One could make as good music as that out of a milk-cart. One would accept such musicless verse only from a man of genius. But even here Mr. Hardy takes us home with him and makes us stand by his side and listen to the clucking stream. He takes us home with him again in the poem called "Overlooking the River Stour," which begins:

"The swallows flew in the curves of an eight  
Above the river-gleam  
In the wet June's last beam:  
Like little crossbows animate,  
The swallows flew in the curves of an eight  
Above the river-gleam."

Planing up shavings made of spray,  
A moor-hen darted out  
From the bank thereabout,  
And though the stream-shine ripped her way;  
Planing up shavings made of spray,  
A moor-hen darted out."

In this poem we find observation leaping into song in one line and hobbling into a hard-wrought image in another. Both the line in which the first appears, however—

"Like little crossbows animate,"

and the line in which the second happens—

"Planing up shavings made of spray,"

equally make us feel how watchful and earnest an observer is Mr. Hardy. He is a man, we realize, to whom bird and river, heath and stone, road and field and tree, mean immensely more than to his fellows. We do not suggest that he observes nature without bias—that he mirrors the procession of visible things with the delight of a child or a lyric poet. He makes nature his mirror as well as himself a mirror of nature. He colors it with all his sadness, his helplessness, his (if we may invent the word and use it without offence) warpedness. If we are not mistaken, he once compared a bleak morning in "The Woodlanders" to the face of a still-born baby. He loves to dwell on the uncomfortable moods of nature—on such things as:

"... the watery light  
Of the moon in its old age";

concerning which moon he goes on to describe how:

"Green-rheumed clouds were hurrying past where mute and cold  
it globed  
Like a dying dolphin's eye seen through a lapping wave."

This, we fear, is a failure, but it is a failure in a common mood of the author's. It is a mood in which nature looks out at us at times, almost ludicrous in its melancholy. In such a poem as that from which we have just quoted, it is as though we saw nature with a drip on the end of its nose. Mr. Hardy's is something different from a tragic vision. It is a desolate, disheartening, and, in a way, morbid vision. We wander with him too often under—



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Through whose flayed fingers I see too clearly  
The nakedness of the place."

And Mr. Hardy's vision of the life of men and women transgresses similarly into a denial of gladness. His gloom, we feel, goes too far. It goes so far that we are tempted at times to think of it as a factitious gloom. He writes a poem, "Honeymoon Time at an Inn," and this is the characteristic atmosphere in which he introduces us to the bridegroom and bride:

"At the shiver of morning, a little before the false dawn,  
The moon was at the window-square,  
Deedily brooding in deformed decay—  
The curve hewn off her cheek as by an adze;  
At the shiver of morning, a little before the false dawn,  
So the moon looked in there."

There are no happy lovers or happy marriages in Mr. Hardy's world. Such people as are happy would not be happy if only they knew the truth. Many of Mr. Hardy's poems are dramatic lyrics on the pattern invented by Robert Browning—short stories in verse. But there is a certain air of triumph even in Browning's tragic figures. Mr. Hardy's figures are the inmates of despair. Browning's love-poems belong to heroic literature. Mr. Hardy's love-poems belong to the literature of downheartedness. Browning's men and women are men and women who have had the courage of their love, or who are shown at least against a background of Browning's own courage. Mr. Hardy's men and women do not know the wild faith of love. They have not the courage even of their sins. They are helpless as fishes in a net—a scarcely rebellious population of the ill-matched and the ill-starred.

Many of the poems in the present book fail through a lack of imaginative energy. It is imaginative energy that makes the reading of a great tragedy like "King Lear" not a depressing, but an exalting experience. But is there anything save depression to be got from reading such a poem as "A Caged Goldfinch":—

"Within a churchyard, on a recent grave,  
I saw a little cage  
That jailed a goldfinch. All was silence, save  
Its hops from stage to stage.

There was inquiry in its wistful eye,  
And once it tried to sing;  
Of him or her who placed it there, and why,  
No one knew anything.

True, a woman was found drowned the day ensuing,  
And some at times averred  
The grave to be her false one's, who when wooing  
Gave her the bird."

Apart even from the ludicrous associations which modern slang has given the last phrase, making it look like a queer pun, this poem seems to us to drive sorrow over the edge of the ridiculous. That goldfinch has surely escaped from a Max-Beerbohm parody. The ingenuity with which Mr. Hardy plots tragic situations for his characters in some of his other poems is, indeed, in repeated danger of misleading him into parody. One of his poems tells, for instance, how a stranger finds an old man scrubbing a Statue of Liberty in a city square, and, hearing he does it for love, hails him as "Liberty's knight divine." The old man confesses that he does not care twopence for Liberty, and declares that he keeps the statue clean in memory of his beautiful daughter, who had sat as a model for it—a girl fair in fame as in form. In the interests of his plot and his dismal philosophy, Mr. Hardy identifies the stranger with the sculptor of the statue, and dismisses us with his blighting aside on the old man's credulous love of his dead daughter:

"Answer I gave not. Of that form  
The carver was I at his side;  
His child my model, held so saintly,  
Grand in feature,  
Gross in nature,  
In the dens of vice had died."

This is worse than optimism.

It is only fair to say that, though poem after poem—including the one about the fat young man whom the doctors gave only six months to live unless he walked a great deal, and who therefore was compelled to refuse a drive in the poet's phaeton, though night was closing over the heath—dramatizes the meaningless miseries of life, there is also to be found in some of the poems a faint sunset-glow of hope, almost of faith. There have been compensations, we realize

in "I Travel as a Phantom Now," even in this world of skeletons. Mr. Hardy's fatalism concerning God seems not very far from faith in God in that beautiful Christmas poem, "The Oxen." Still, the ultimate mood of the poems is not faith. It is one of pity so despairing as to be almost nihilism. There is mockery in it without the merriment of mockery. The general atmosphere of the poems, it seems to us, is to be found perfectly expressed in the last three lines of one of the poems, which is about a churchyard, a dead woman, a living rival, and the ghost of a soldier:

"There was a cry by the white-flowered mound,  
There was a laugh from underground,  
There was a deeper gloom around."

How much of the art of Thomas Hardy is suggested in those lines! The laugh from underground, the deeper gloom—are they not all but omnipresent throughout his later and greatest work? The war could not deepen such pessimism. As a matter of fact, Mr. Hardy's war poetry is more cheerful, because more heroic, than his poetry about the normal world. Destiny was already crueler than any war-lord. The Prussian, one fancies, could be no more than a fly—a poisonous fly—on the wheel of destiny's disastrous car.

### LIMELIGHT ON PADISHAHS.

"Abdul Hamid." By Sir EDWIN PEARS. (Constable. 8s. 6d. net.

PROBABLY no Englishman living can compare with Sir Edwin Pears for knowledge and understanding of Turkey. For two generations this famous "Daily News" correspondent lived in Constantinople, and his despatches, notably those on the Bulgarian horrors forty years ago, have made history. We may say of Sir Edwin Pears, the doyen of foreign correspondents, and probably our best representative of what unfortunately we must now call the old school, that he has been throughout his long career what the ideal journalist ought to be—the contemporary historian. Another distinguishing merit of his is his steady, undeviating Liberalism. Towards the people among whom he lived for so long he had the sympathy of a genuine Liberal; towards the diplomacy which permitted or rather enabled Abdul Hamid to remain a curse to Turkey and to Europe for thirty years he kept the critical standpoint of a genuine Liberalism. It is these qualities that make his study so valuable and suggestive.

There is hardly need to say that the picture he gives of Abdul Hamid is likely to be the true one. He saw and recorded Abdul's advent to power and his overthrow, and during all the unhappy years between, he lived, as it were, within the shadow of Yildiz Kiosk. It is by no means the picture that legend, with the help of diplomacy's excuses for its own faults, has built up—that of a sort of Satanic superman, a monster of cunning and cruelty, whose perfect mastery of the art of pitting one Power against another made Europe's ablest diplomats mere children in his hands. On the contrary, Abdul was an Asiatic barbarian of a very ordinary kind. His intelligence was hardly more than "mediocre"; he had "no literary education whatever" in the European sense; his master-passions, as with any half-savage despot, were suspicion, jealousy, and fear, and all his cunning was simply their expression. He feared and suspected everybody and everything, shut himself in a Palace that was girdled with successive lines of fortification, and established around himself a vast spider's network of espionage that extended to the farthest point of the Empire. Of statesmanship he had not a trace. Upon this Sir Edwin Pears is insistent. In mental and moral calibre he was as worthless as, let us say, his fellow-Sultan, Abdul Aziz of Morocco, but without his amiable weakness for motor-cars and mechanical toys. Even his army he neglected until it became utterly disorganized and inefficient. A few phrases may be taken at random from Sir Edwin Pears's portrait study. Abdul's judgment was that of "an ill-balanced and mediocre intelligence"; his quality that of "an essentially common-place man, mean, sordid, and cunning." So far from being the super-diplomat, he seems in dealing with foreign countries to have "held the opinion of the ignorant Turkish peasant that all other States ought to do the Padishah's bidding."

Like many other Liberals, Sir Edwin Pears clearly regrets our treatment of the Young Turks. British

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diplomacy had a magnificent chance in 1908, but wantonly threw it away. In the early days of the new régime, England was idolized by the Young Turks. What was the response? Utter indifference or worse. Sir Edwin Pears insists repeatedly on the predominantly Moslem character of the Young Turk movement. It is clearly his answer to the campaign of calumny launched against the leaders of the Turkish Revolution by the "Times" and other leading papers of that date, denouncing them as a gang of Jews, crypto-Jews, and Freemasons. The purpose of this calumny is hard to guess; at any rate, it was quite false. It is not without significance perhaps that anti-Semitism is once more being used in the same hands as a weapon against another Revolution. As for our diplomacy in those days, let Sir Edwin Pears speak. His words have an amazing applicability to-day too:—

"A little kindly feeling towards inexperienced idealists, a little friendly guidance without any attempt at interference, would have stood England in good stead. British diplomacy looked on, coldly, disdainfully, and did not rise to the occasion. . . . During that time it was a matter of public remark that nearly everyone at the British Embassy . . . spoke disparagingly of Young Turkey. The only British newspaper published in the capital, and on that account supposed, quite incorrectly, to represent the opinions of the Embassy, was one of the most constant to join in denunciation of the Committee."

Is it any wonder that Germany was able to step in and steal the chance from our hands? Nevertheless, Sir Edwin Pears believes that even in 1914 we had sufficient goodwill among the Young Turks to have kept Turkey out of the war.

"It has often been said that if the Committee had not been in power, the adhesion of Turkey to the Central Powers would have been avoided. No valid reason exists to support this view. . . .

"The present writer suggests that when the 'Goeben' and the 'Breslau' entered the Dardanelles, they should have been followed by British ships and compelled to disarm. . . . Most of the Young Turkey party would have been glad to see such energetic action at the crisis. It was these German ships, joined by others of the Turkish fleet and all under German leaders, which bombarded Odessa and at once brought Turkey into the war."

#### MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

"Political Portraits." By CHARLES WHIBLEY. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)

MR. CHARLES WHIBLEY goes through history like an electioneering bill-poster. He plasters up his wretched election-time vulgarities not only on Fox's House of Commons but on Shakespeare's Theatre. It is only a few months since he was caught taking liberties of the same sort with the far from amenable Dean Swift. He is apparently interested in men of genius chiefly as regards their attitude to his electioneering activities. Shakespeare, he seems to imagine, was the sort of person who would have asked for nothing better as a frieze in his sitting-room in New Place than a scroll bearing in huge letters some such motto as "Vote for Podgkins and Down with the Common People" or "Vote for Podgkins and No League of Nations." Mr. Whibley thinks Shakespeare was like that, and so he exalts Shakespeare. He has, we do not doubt, read Shakespeare, but that has made no difference. He would clearly have taken much the same view of Shakespeare if he had never read him. Shakespeare has conveyed as little of his genius to the inner recesses of Mr. Whibley's mind as did Swift. To be great, said Emerson, is to be misunderstood. To be great is assuredly to be misunderstood by Mr. Whibley.

We do not think we do an injustice to Mr. Whibley in dwelling especially on the essay he has written on "Shakespeare: Patriot and Tory" in the present book. It could be unjust if we were to suggest that Mr. Whibley could write nothing better than this. His historical portraits are often interesting as the work of a clever illustrator even if we cannot accept them as portraits. Those essays in which he keeps himself out of the picture and eschews ideas most successfully attract us as coming from the hand of a skilful writer, who can quote better things than he can write. His studies of Clarendon, Metternich, Napoleon, and Melbourne are all of them good entertainment. If we comment on the Shakespeare essay rather than on these, it is because here more than anywhere else in the book the author's skill as a

portrait-painter is put to the test. Here he has to depend almost exclusively on his imagination, intelligence, and knowledge of human nature. Here, where there are scarcely any epigrams or anecdotes to quote, a writer must reveal whether he is an artist and a critic, or a commonplace intelligence with the trick of words. Mr. Whibley, we fear, comes badly off from the test. We do not blame him for having written on the theme that "Shakespeare, being a patriot, was a Tory also." It would be easy to conceive a scholarly and amusing study of Shakespeare on these lines. Whitman maintained that there is much in Shakespeare to offend the democratic mind; and there is no reason why an intelligent Tory should not praise Shakespeare for what Whitman quarrelled with in him. There is every reason, however, why the portraiture of Shakespeare as a Tory, if it is to be done, should be done with grace, intelligence, and sureness of touch. Mr. Whibley lacks all these qualifications, especially the second. The proof of Shakespeare's Toryism, for instance, which he draws from "Troilus and Cressida," is based on a total misunderstanding of the famous and simple speech of Ulysses about the necessity of observing "degree, priority, and place." Mr. Whibley, plunging blindly about in his Tory blinkers, imagines that in this speech Ulysses, or rather Shakespeare, is referring to the necessity of keeping the democracy in its place. "Might he not," he asks, "have written these prophetic lines with his mind's eye upon France of the Terror or upon modern Russia?" Had Mr. Whibley read the play with that small amount of self-forgetfulness without which no man has ever yet been able to appreciate literature, he would have discovered that it is the unruliness not of the democracy but of the aristocracy against which Ulysses—or, if you prefer it, Shakespeare— inveighs in this speech. The speech is aimed at the self-will and factiousness of Achilles and his disloyalty to Agamemnon. If there are any moderns who come under the noble lash of Ulysses, we fear they must be sought for not among either French or Russian revolutionists, but in the persons of such sound Tories as Sir Edward Carson and such sound patriots as Mr. Lloyd George. We are tolerably certain that neither Ulysses nor Shakespeare foresaw Sir Edward Carson's escapades or Mr. Lloyd George's insubordinate career as a member of Mr. Asquith's Cabinet. But how admirably they sum up all the wild statesmanship of these later days in lines which Mr. Whibley, accountably enough, fails to quote:

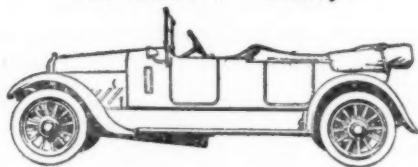
"They tax our policy, and call it cowardice;  
Count wisdom as no member of the war;  
Foretell prescience, and esteem no act  
But that of hand; the still and mental parts,—  
That do contrive how many hands shall strike,  
When fitness calls them on, and know, by measure  
Of their observant toil, the enemies' weight—  
Why, they hath not a finger's dignity.  
They call this bed-work, mappery, closet-war:  
So that the ram, that batters down the wall,  
For the great swing of rudeness of his poise,  
They place before his hand that made the engine,  
Or those that with the fineness of their souls  
By reason guide his execution.

There is not much in the moral of this speech, we should have thought, to bring balm to the soul of the author of the "Letters of an Englishman" in the "Daily Mail."

Mr. Whibley is not content, unfortunately, with having failed to grasp the point of "Troilus and Cressida." He blunders with equal assiduity in regard to "Coriolanus." He treats this play, not as a play about Coriolanus, but as a pamphlet in favor of Coriolanus. He has never been initiated, it seems, into the first secret of imaginative literature, which is that one may portray a hero sympathetically without making-believe that his vices are virtues. Shakespeare no more endorses Coriolanus's patrician pride than he endorses Othello's jealousy or Macbeth's murderous ambition. Shakespeare was concerned with painting noble natures, not with pandering to their vices. He makes us sympathize with Coriolanus in his heroism, in his sufferings, in his return to his better nature, in his death; but from Shakespeare's point of view, as from ours, the Nietzschean arrogance which led Coriolanus to become a traitor to his city is a theme for sadness, not (as apparently with Mr. Whibley) for enthusiasm. "Shakespeare," cries Mr. Whibley excitedly, as he quotes some of Coriolanus's anti-popular speeches, "will not let the people off. He pursues it with an irony of scorn." "There in a few lines," he writes of some other speeches, "are expressed the eternal folly and

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shame of democracy. Ever committed to the worse cause, the people has not even the courage of its own opinions." It would be interesting to know whether in Mr. Whibley's eyes Coriolanus's hatred of the people is a sufficiently splendid virtue to cover his guilt in becoming a traitor. That good Tories have the right to become traitors was a gospel preached often enough in regard to the Ulster trouble before the war. It may be doubted, however, whether Shakespeare was sufficiently a Tory to foresee the necessity of such a gospel in "Coriolanus." Certainly, the mother of Coriolanus, who was far from being a Radical, or even a mild Whig, preached the very opposite of the gospel of treason. She warned Coriolanus that his triumph over Rome would be a traitor's triumph, that his name would be "dogged with curses," and that his character would be summed up in history in one fatal sentence:

"The man was noble,  
But with his last attempt he wiped it out,  
Destroyed his country, and his name remains  
To the ensuing age abhorred."

Mr. Whibley appears to loathe the mass of human beings so excessively that he does not quite realize the enormity (from the modern point of view) of Coriolanus's crime. It would, we agree, be foolish to judge him too scrupulously from a modern point of view. But Mr. Whibley has asked us to accept the play as a tract for the times, and we must examine it as such in order to discover what Mr. Whibley means.

But, after all, Mr. Whibley's failure as a portrait-painter is a failure of the spirit even more than of the intellect. A vulgar spirit cannot comprehend a magnanimous spirit, and Mr. Whibley's imagination does not move in that large Shakespearean world in which illustrious men salute their mortal enemies in immortal sentences of praise after the manner of:

"He was the noblest Roman of them all."

The author who is capable of writing Mr. Whibley's character-study of Fox does not understand enough about the splendor and the miseries of human nature to write well on Shakespeare. Of Fox Mr. Whibley says:

"He put no bounds upon his hatred of England, and he thought it not shameful to intrigue with foreigners against the safety and credit of the land to which he belonged. Wherever there was a foe to England, there was a friend of Fox. America, Ireland, France, each in turn inspired his enthusiasm. When Howe was victorious at Brooklyn, he publicly deplored 'the terrible news.' After Valmy he did not hesitate to express his joy. 'No public event,' he wrote, 'not excepting Yorktown and Saratoga, ever happened that gave me so much delight. I could not allow myself to believe it for some days for fear of disappointment.'"

It does not seem to occur to Mr. Whibley that in regard to America, Ireland, and France, Fox was, according to the standard of every ideal for which the Allies profess to be fighting, tremendously right, and that, were it not for Yorktown and Valmy, America and France would not to-day be great free nations fighting against the embattled Whibleys of Germany. So far as Mr. Whibley's political philosophy goes, we see no reason why he should not declare himself on the side of Germany. He believes in patriotism, it is true, but he is apparently a patriot of the sort that loves his country and hates his fellow-countrymen (if that is what he means by "the people," and we suppose it must be). Mr. Whibley has certainly the mind of a German professor. His vehemence against the Germans for appreciating Shakespeare is strangely like a German professor's vehemence against the English for not appreciating him. "Why then," he asks,

"should the Germans have attempted to lay violent hands upon our Shakespeare? It is but part of their general policy of pillage. Stealing comes as easy to them as it came to Bardolph and Nym, who in Calais stole a fire-shovel. Wherever they have gone they have cast a thievish eye upon what does not belong to them. They hit upon the happy plan of levying tolls upon starved Belgium. It was not enough for their greed to empty a country of food; they must extract something from its pocket, even though it be dying of hunger. . . . No doubt, if they came to these shores, they would feed their fury by scattering Shakespeare's dust to the winds of heaven. As they are unable to sack Stratford, they do what seems to them the next best thing: they hoist the Jolly Roger over Shakespeare's works.

Their arrogance is busy in vain. Shakespeare shall never be theirs. He was an English patriot, who would always have refused to bow the knee to an insolent alien."

This is mere foaming at the mouth—the tawdry violence of a

Tory Thersites. This passage is a measure of the intelligence and imagination Mr. Whibley brings to the study of Shakespeare. It is simply theatrical Jolly-Rogerism.

### A POETIC DIARY.

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In a "Foreword," Mr. Lawrence tells us that these poems "should not be considered separately, as so many single pieces. They are intended as an essential story or history or confession, unfolding one from the other in organic development, the whole revealing the intrinsic experience of a man during the crisis of manhood, when he marries and comes into himself": something, that is to say, of the autobiographical stamp of "Sonnets from the Portuguese." There is a kind of truth in Mr. Lawrence's definition, but it is only a half-truth. Of organic continuity in the poems there is not a trace, not only because the violence and confusion of his feeling do not permit us to follow his Pilgrim's Progress, but because he does not reveal to us his destination. What does Mr. Lawrence mean us to see? That his love for the "woman" has overcome his hate, that his love and hate have made a match of it, have, by some strange bridal, polarised the contrary tempests of his spirits? The last poem reads us a discovery no clearer than the first. No; but these poems do, in their passion, in their ague of subjective expression, lift the veil upon an obscure image of the purpose outlined by the poet. The poems are disjointed impressions of it, without beginning or end and without sequence, without reference to a further spiritual aim, and, it must be confessed, without beauty. The poems exist, they stand or fall by the fact of this conflict and by that, in fairness to Mr. Lawrence and to give him all his due and a little over, by that criterion they must be judged.

Yet, is not this to do violence to the critical function? Is it not the duty of the critic to speak his mind, not about the cause, but the effect of a poem, not upon its impulse, but the achieved transformation of that impulse into something new, coherent, and entire? Certainly, if we allow Mr. Lawrence to be a poet, in the accepted sense. By those values, indeed, he cuts rather a poor figure. At times and by the laxest of standards he is—there are no soft words for it—repulsive and ridiculous, whichever way you choose to look at it. This, for instance:—

"Why do you spurt and sprattle  
Like that, bunny?  
Why should I want to throttle  
You, bunny?"

Or:—

"How will you have it?—the rose is all in all,  
Or the ripe rose-fruits of the luscious fall?  
The sharp begetting or the child begot?  
Our consummation matters, or does it not?"

And the erotics in the book, with their mis-fire phrases like "a bonfire of Oneness" and so on, do not excite our sympathy either for the author's taste or expression. And throughout, Mr. Lawrence repels us by a disregard of the commonest discipline of language. "Almost, almost, oh, very nearly," he exclaims somewhere, which, trivial as it is, is an indication of an over-stressing, not of meaning, but of words, a malformation of utterance which is, alas! not a parade of strength but a confession of weakness, and which spoils a greater portion of this volume than Mr. Lawrence should have allowed. "The definition of good prose," said Coleridge, "is proper words in their proper places—of good verse, the most proper words in their proper places" and Mr. Lawrence's habit of discharging cannonades at the reader, if suitable to the artillery, is an offence to poetry. The citadel of God, it is said, is stormed by violence, but not that of art by extravagance and gesticulation. Mr. Lawrence's intensely introspective mood, again, does not really penetrate and fuse his material into a conscious, stable form, as for instance it sometimes did with De Musset, with whom our author has certain obvious affinities. Poetry is not, after all, the reflection of excited, spasmodic speech. Like the universal laws which dominate the least as the most hurried motions of our planet, it is a balance, a poise made from the conjunction and correspondency of the



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various bodies which are natural and necessary to its composition. And Mr. Lawrence cannot evade or destroy those laws by allowing no process to intervene between the conception of his mood and its sudden transference into the appearance of a poetic shape. It is he and not they who will suffer by such a violation.

As a poet, then, Mr. Lawrence on any analysis or valuation, cannot stand. He is regulated, as he himself says, only by the law of his own being, and his poems are simply the direct and instantaneous transmitter of the egoistic mood of that being. They are not poems, that is to say, but parts of a shorthand diary thrown into a rough-and-ready metrical receptacle. And such is their interest. They do not bear quotation; they are violent, prolix, and turbid. But interesting they are, because they are sincere, because there is something behind them, because the distracted soul of their maker is a soul, and not a mere bundle of attitudes and series of grimaces. It is the presence of that soul, "a little damaged" in its suffering, bewilderment, strife, and pathos, that really redeems the book, and endows it with an impressiveness which no just and sensitive critic could refuse it.

### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

**"The Complete Despatches of Lord French."** (Chapman & Hall. 21s. net.)

HERE are the official accounts of the then Commander-in-Chief of Mons, the Marne, the Aisne, Flanders, Neuve Chapelle, the Second Battle of Ypres, Loos, and the Hohenzollern Redoubt, with maps, portraits, and the names of all the officers and men "mentioned." This edition is limited to 500 copies. It is right that Lord French's historical despatches should be presented to us in this worthy form. Now there is more light into the depth of our peril in the early engagements of the war, now we are aware of the skill and devotion of the little army which helped so materially to frustrate the whole German plan by bringing the enemy's huge military machine to a standstill, when by all the dogmas of the materialists it should have run right over us, we are better able to admire the austere brevity and lucidity of the General's account of the work of himself and his staff and his army. There is nothing to regret here; we have, added to great deeds, the reticence, the terse accuracy, and the quietness of the men who accomplished them. The literary quality of these despatches is such that, all things considered, we would not wish them better done.

**"Basil Wilberforce: A Memoir."** By the Rt. Hon. G. W. E. RUSSELL. (Murray. 8s. net.)

BASIL WILBERFORCE was most exactly the character for a biographical study by Mr. Russell. That they were friends is little to the point; it would not be easy to find among the Liberal Churchmen and Reformers of his day one who was not a friend of Mr. Russell's. The late Archdeacon of Westminster came to the fore by force of personality and an eloquent tongue. He was not a genius and was little of a scholar, and his career was given its start by the trivial act of nepotism which placed him in the important and lucrative living of St. Mary's, Southampton; but he strove to justify the choice of his father by a life of unsparing activity. His eloquence, which was helped by a beautiful voice, and his large heartedness, won for him respect and even admiration, so that his apostolic zeal for abolishing alcoholic drink, while seeing no objection to the taxing of bread, and his other mental foibles, were readily forgiven. In offering him the Westminster canonry, Gladstone hinted at the discretion necessary in the Abbey pulpit. Mr. Russell's friendship has not prevented candor in this interesting memoir.

**"Letters to Helen: The Impressions of an Artist on the Western Front."** By KEITH HENDERSON. (Chatto & Windus. 6s. net.)

WHETHER these letters, never meant for publication, and their accompanying sketches in color, done by an artist at war to give his mind a holiday, will appeal to everybody, it is not easy for us to say. Appraising war books, for those who know the actualities (as apart from what the Press

thinks is what the public wants), is work better left alone until it is possible to be honest about it. But it would be unfair to pass by this delightful volume. We have seen very few English books from the Western Front which were worth putting in a place where they could be found again. But this is one. That is because, however, we know the places and the atmosphere which prompted the author to get out his box of colors, and we know those scenes and those episodes he describes to his wife with considerable gaiety and some fidelity. He does not tell her all about it. Well, we know what he leaves out. It is part of the fun watching this artist negotiating the obstacles; and he does it like an artist. If there are any more such letters and such sketches we should like to see them.

**"New and Old."** By EDITH SICHEL. With an Introduction by A. C. BRADLEY. (Constable. 10s. 6d. net.)

THE editor who collects the newspaper contributions of a writer always assumes he must anticipate the knowing criticism that his labor was unnecessary. It is the formal and expected thing to say of journalistic work that it is ephemeral. Why the complaint should be specially reserved for newspaper work, we cannot tell. Publishers of books are equally guilty with publishers of newspapers for the unloading of shoddy. Mr. Bradley is, indeed, to be commended for rescuing Edith Sichel's book-reviews and general articles from the files in the cellar. Scholarship and wit are not so common that we can afford to bury them. Besides her philanthropic work in the East End and elsewhere, Miss Sichel was known to the reading public as an authority on French literature and history. She had not the rare convincing quality of the great critics; but she dealt only with subjects to which she had given a life of study and thought, and, if she had not the broad daylight of a mind of the first magnitude, she gave us a steady and reliable lamp for sure guidance. The tender remembrance of Joseph Joachim which she contributed to THE NATION (reprinted in this book), showed her lucid and earnest manner in handling the things she cared for most in art and life.

### The Week in the City.

A LONG and bitter war seemed to be the keynote of Mr. Lloyd George's speech at the Gray's Inn banquet, and the week began with pronounced dullness in British Government stocks. On Tuesday afternoon Consols fell to 54, the lowest price for a long time past. At the same time there was a sharp drop of 5 points in Swedish Three-and-a-Half per Cents. to 108. It is satisfactory to hear from the meeting of the London and River Plate Bank that, in spite of the liquidation of bad debts due to the crisis in Argentina, the bank is able to pay 15 per cent., with a better carry-forward than last year. War Bonds have been selling rather better; there is a good deal of anxiety about finance, and City men do not like the idea of a capital levy, which has been represented in some of the papers as a dishonorable method of confiscating portions of the war debt. This seems to be due to a misapprehension. No responsible person has suggested that there should be a special levy on the war debt. A general levy on wealth will enable the Government to cancel a fraction of the war debt, and so reduce the sum which would otherwise have to be raised out of Income-tax for payment of the annual interest. As Mr. Bonar Law is being criticised for having expressed his readiness to entertain a capital levy scheme, it would be just as well if he would indicate how such a scheme could be justly carried out; for it is surprising how many simple folk are asking whether their investments in War Loan can be considered safe. Meanwhile the prospect of increased taxation and the usual Christmas stagnation has reduced business in the Industrial Market. The boom in brewery shares seems to have passed its zenith. There is no doubt that many fortunes must have been made by private speculators during the last few months. Money has been in demand, and the discount market is steady. The prospect of German experts controlling Russian railways, Russian finances, and Russian industries is causing grave apprehension.

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## INDIGO THROUGH THE AGES



Cutting natural Indigo into cakes

From  
3000 B.C. to  
1917 A.D.

*Indigo in use 3000 years before the Christian era: Attempts to repress its use in the Middle Ages: Synthetic Indigo discovered in 1866: A German monopoly: Patents Act brings a German factory to England: This factory sold to Messrs. Levinstein, Limited. Difficulties of manufacture overcome. British Indigo on the market.*

**N**O other dyestuff has so interesting and romantic a history as Indigo. For more than five thousand years this product, originally obtained from the sap of certain leguminous plants, has been the premier blue colouring-matter of the dyer, whilst by the skill of the modern chemist its importance has been still further augmented. Long before the Christian era, the Indigo-bearing plant from which the dyestuff was obtained flourished in the valley of the Nile. The dyers of ancient

Thebes employed it for ornamenting the garments of the living and the burial cloths of the dead. The linen wrappings of Egyptian mummies, dating from about 3000 B.C., have been found to be dyed with Indigo, which can still be readily extracted and chemically identified.

**I**N the Middle Ages, Indigo was the subject of much ignorance and many quaint superstitions, which were fostered by the woad cultivators, who feared its competition in their trade. Owing to the bitter opposition of the woad growers, repressive laws were passed in England, France, and Germany prohibiting its importation. It was characterised as the "Devil's food," and various dangerous properties were attributed to it. Henry IV. of France even issued an edict condemning to death anyone who used that "pernicious drug." This struggle ended in the complete victory for Indigo, which in the end entirely replaced the home-grown woad, although even to the present day the statute prohibiting its use has never been repealed in England. With the increased use of the dyestuff in Europe, the cultivation and extraction of Indigo became an important Indian industry.

**I**N the latter half of the nineteenth century the world's consumption of Indigo was estimated at 11,000,000 lbs. (100 % strength), and the value of this dyestuff exported from India at about £4,000,000 sterling. Towards the close of the century, however, a great economic change came about through the application to Indigo of modern organic chemistry.

### The Secret of Indigo revealed

**F**OR 5,000 years our knowledge of Indigo had been practically stationary. In 1866 the late Professor Adolph von Baeyer began his momentous researches into the dyestuff, which by laying bare the innermost structure of the Indigo molecule, not only completely revolutionised the industrial manufacture, but also disclosed a veritable Aladdin's cavern and a limitless vista of artificial dyestuffs, sharing the valuable properties of Indigo, but capable of dyeing every colour of the rainbow. These treasures only waited to be garnered by the skilled hand of the organic chemist. Baeyer's researches demonstrated that the Indigo molecule consists of a complex assembly of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen atoms arranged around a central nucleus of two benzene rings.

**H**AVING elucidated its structure, the chemist could now build up the dyestuff artificially from products contained in coal-tar. A number of different methods of doing this were devised, but it required about twenty years

